United Nations S/PV.6313

Security Council

Sixty-fifth year

Provisional

6313th meeting

Wednesday, 12 May 2010, 10.35 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Salam	(Lebanon)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Ebner
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr. Barbalić
	Brazil	Mrs. Viotti
	China	Mr. Du Xiaocong
	France	Mr. De Rivière
	Gabon	Mr. Issoze-Ngondet
	Japan	Mr. Takasu
	Mexico	Mr. Heller
	Nigeria	Mr. Lolo
	Russian Federation	Mr. Pankin
	Turkey	Mr. Apakan
	Uganda	Mr. Rugunda
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Parham
	United States of America	Ms. Anderson

Agenda

The situation in Somalia

Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia (S/2010/234)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506.

10-35930 (E)

Please recycle

The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Somalia

Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia (S/2010/234)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives Norway and Somalia, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, the representatives of the aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the Security Council, I extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. Abdurahman Ibrahim, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources of Somalia.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Political Office for Somalia.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Ould Abdallah to take a seat at the Council table.

I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from His Excellency Mr. Pedro Serrano, in which he requests to be invited, in his capacity as acting head of the delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to His Excellency Mr. Pedro Serrano.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Serrano to take the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the Permanent Representative of Uganda to the United Nations, in which he requests that the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union Commission, His Excellency Mr. Ramtane Lamamra, be invited to participate in the consideration of the item in accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 to Mr. Lamamra.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Lamamra to take the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

I wish to draw the attention of the members of the Council to document S/2010/234, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on Somalia.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Ould Abdallah. I now give the floor to Mr. Ould Abdallah.

Mr. Ould Abdallah: During my first presentation on Somalia to this Council on 17 December 2007 (see S/PV.5805), I proposed three options for addressing the situation: business as usual, a total withdrawal from Somalia, or simultaneous action in the political, security and development fields. I would like, in that connection, to thank the Secretary-General and Under-Secretary-General Lynn Pascoe for their continued understanding and support for Somalia. In particular, I welcome their confidence that the United Nations should and can move beyond the status quo to really make a difference in the future of Somalia and to strengthen the Organization's image in Africa and beyond.

One important example in support of the third option is the Secretary-General's engagement with the Government of Turkey to co-convene next week's Istanbul conference on Somalia. Despite some suggestions that it is either too early or too late for such a high-level gathering, we should all recognize that, after years of anarchy, there will never be a right time in Somalia. We have to act now.

The Istanbul conference comes one year after the Secretary-General convened the Brussels conference, at which $213 million were pledged to help the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) make progress in strengthening their security. During the Brussels conference, the Secretary-General was able to count on strong support from the African Union (AU), the European Union (EU), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the League of Arab States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and several countries, in particular Japan, Norway and the United States. Such support, and that of others, is equally needed today for a successful Istanbul Conference.

As a follow-up to Brussels, more troops are being trained inside and outside Somalia. The ongoing training in Uganda is a joint operation between Africa, the EU and the United States, with 2,000 troops being prepared in two batches. In that context, the new Somali Army Chief of Staff, a well-respected career officer, needs strong and unwavering support from his Government and must be helped to organize his work and his forces without excessive internal or external interference. His colleagues heading the police force deserve similar assistance. It the context of training, I would like to add that I am grateful to France for having initiated the first training operation with Djibouti last year.

Likewise, the African Union Mission in Somalia, which now numbers just under 7,000 and still needs many more battalions, should be strengthened and, at the same time, helped to carry out its duties of protecting federal institutions and assisting the needy. Where the international community can help is in providing equipment and salaries, at least for one year, for those forces that have been properly trained. The memorandum of understanding signed recently between the African Union, IGAD and my office in Nairobi should contribute to facilitating that undertaking.

On the political front, despite working under difficult conditions, the TFG needs to show strength in unity, determination in action and a common purpose in its policies. It should prioritize its actions, concentrating on those that are essential for the population and leaving aside less urgent ones. For its part, the international community can help by implementing its commitments, especially in the disbursement of pledged resources. There should be a temporary halt in the spending of funds and energy on strategies and road maps in order to allow a re-examination of our achievements.

The TFG has succeeded in reaching out to other groups committed to peace and stability. An agreement has been signed with Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a — a key religious and resistance movement — that could provide a blue print for future agreements. I would like to reiterate here that the door to peace is open to all Somalis wishing to end the agony of their country.

A memorandum of understanding signed with Puntland on piracy-related issues is also of significant importance. Piracy is a criminal activity that is increasingly being carried out far from Somalia's coastline and is encouraged by the payment of huge ransoms. The international maritime presence — Operation Atalanta, NATO and other national navies — has certainly served to deter some pirates, has succeeded in arresting others and is most welcome. However, there is consensus that much more could be done.

First, we need to support, strengthen and empower the TFG and other authorities, in particular through employment schemes for youth in affected communities. Secondly, we should also consider a new initiative. Those countries known to be fishing in Somali waters should agree to pay a licensing fee, with the revenue generated put into a form of escrow account. The revenue collected would be used by the authorities after clearance by the account's Somali and international management. That approach would certainly be better for all than the current situation, in which licensing money is apparently paid to certain individuals but fails to reach the legitimate authorities. I invite serious reflection and action on this matter.

Meanwhile, inside Somalia the humanitarian situation remains horrendous, despite the laudable work of the World Food Programme and other agencies, including UNICEF. It cannot and should not be tolerated. At the same time, we should not ignore the fact that continued impunity is fuelling this tragedy.

The humanitarian and human rights situations are part and parcel of the same problem and should be addressed simultaneously. Shedding more light on the humanitarian and human rights crisis is a key ingredient in the long march towards peace in Somalia. With all international agencies working together, harmonizing their thinking and actions, the international community can integrate its policies and strengthen its results.

Furthermore, once Governments, development agencies, business associations and non-governmental organizations act together, they can help to bring about a major move away from past practices of managing the status quo. In that context, the Istanbul Conference comes at the right time. It shows Somalis and their leaders that there are persons, countries and organizations that are genuinely ready and committed to working with them for peace and stability. Along with the Secretary-General, I would like once more to thank the Government of Turkey for its important initiative.

As I indicated earlier, I have always said that the peace process is based on three interrelated pillars: reconciliation, security and development. They should be addressed simultaneously. In those three areas, it is widely recognized that one of Somalia's main assets is its vibrant business community, both inside and outside the country. That community can be a force for good, and we should help it to work constructively. Istanbul will provide an exceptional opportunity to do so.

The Conference is, first and foremost, a show of political solidarity with the Somali people, who have suffered so much and have been taken hostage by various groups and individuals. The Conference is also a message of hope to Somalis that they are not alone. In addition to addressing security issues and global threats, including piracy, the Conference will also provide a platform for the Somali private sector, international business and Governments to launch new initiatives for reconstruction and job creation.

Those are indeed significant challenges, although they can be overcome with adequate action. Through public and private partnerships, we can begin to make a difference in the international perception and image of Somalia and, consequently, in the lives of its people. This is the place to reiterate that if we want to make a decisive difference, there is no alternative to moving the international community to Mogadishu to be closer to the victims. Remote control from Nairobi is not leading to progress.

If we do not make the right commitments and take the right action in Somalia now, sooner or later the situation will force us to act, and at a much higher price. One of the most effective actions we can take in Somalia is to support the Government in a concrete manner and, at the same time, ask it to deliver effectively. On the other hand, those countries and individuals who behave like salesmen touting peace conferences for every country in conflict, including Somalia, can only damage the prospects for peace and stability by inciting extremists the world over to be more radical and by granting them veto power over the future of the peoples.

The Istanbul Conference will provide us with an exceptional opportunity to show that Somalia has true friends ready to make a difference. In this year, when the country celebrates its fiftieth anniversary of independence, the support of the Secretary-General, the Government of Turkey and the entire Security Council is much needed and is very welcome by the Government, the Somali people and the region.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Ould Abdallah for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Abdurahman Ibrahim, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources of Somalia.

Mr. Ibrahim (Somalia): I would like at the outset to seize this opportunity to express my profound gratitude to you, Mr. President, for enabling us to participate in this discussion on the situation in Somalia. I would also like to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month.

It is incumbent upon my Government and my people to thank the Security Council for its unwavering support to Somalia's peace and reconciliation efforts. The Transitional Federal Government of Somalia, the immense challenges it faces notwithstanding, continues to provide the leadership and wisdom required in advancing peace and stability in the country.

But the Government's commitment to peace and dialogue and its determination to rebuild a nation shattered by a prolonged crisis are being hampered by a group of terrorists with links to Al-Qaida. Nonetheless, the Government, with the support of the

international community, will continue to provide coordinated, timely and sustained engagement with a view to countering the insurgency and to bringing lasting peace and security to the entire nation. The insurgents' plan to overthrow the Government of national unity and their attempt to foment further destabilization and chaos in the country have been foiled.

What we are witnessing in Somalia now, following the successful efforts for the implementation of the Djibouti peace process, is an inclusive political process with broad-based support. The President, the Speaker of Parliament, all the members of Parliament, the Prime Minister and his cabinet are all operating in Mogadishu. I am pleased to reiterate to the Security Council that the leadership of the Government of national unity in Somalia has succeeded in exercising its mandate with a great deal of responsibility and devotion. It has embraced the principles of collective leadership and has successfully shattered anything that would potentially elicit differences and undermine cohesiveness and unity among members of the Cabinet, on the one hand, and between the Government and Parliament, on the other. The current discussion that is now taking place between members of the Transitional Federal Parliament must not be construed as bickering. It is an exercise of the democracy that is being resuscitated in Somalia, which we trust will strengthen our national institutions and safeguard their political legitimacy.

Somalia, under the leadership of the current Transitional Federal Government, has made significant headway with regard to reconciliation. Important members of Hizbul Islam have embraced the Government's efforts, agreed to support the Government and joined the cabinet. Moreover, some prominent Al-Shabaab commanders and their fighters have defiantly denounced violence publicly, condemned the crimes perpetrated by the radical extremists and subsequently decided to defect to the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia.

Within the framework of my Government's continued attempt to reach out to Somalis who have remained outside the Djibouti peace process, the Government signed, on 15 March 2010, at the African Union headquarters in Addis Ababa, a cooperation agreement between the Transitional Federal Government and Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a. This agreement provides for, among other important elements, the merging of Transitional Federal Government and Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a forces to counter the insurgent menaces. Moreover, most of the provisions that have been agreed upon by both parties within the framework of the agreement are being implemented by my Government.

The Government has succeeded in bringing about stability peacefully in certain regions of the country. It has been able to mediate between the leaders in the Galmudug regional administration, which is located in the central part of Somalia, and has convinced them to settle their differences and other contentious issues peacefully. Following this mediation, the leaders of the Galmudug regional administration, in the presence of the President of the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia, signed an agreement that has successfully ended their differences through compromises and concessions.

In my Government's effort to improve the security situation in the country, it has been able to reorganize the armed forces. Private militias and Government forces have been reintegrated, and are now part of the Somali national army. The Government has made the necessary changes in the leadership of the Somali national security forces to bring about a rapid transformation in the command and control of these forces. Likewise, the Government recently nominated the deputy commander of the Somali national army as part of the agreement package with Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a.

These newly reintegrated forces have been engaged to carry out their national duties. The Government forces have recently gained ground, and this has led to the expulsion of Al-Shabaab from some of its strongholds in Mogadishu, namely Hodan, Howlwadaag, and the road that leads to the Bakara market, also known as Dabka Road — a very famous road. This successful offensive launched by our forces against the radical extremists has generated cautious optimism among our forces and constituted a relief for the forces of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), which were subject to continuous attacks launched from those areas.

The international community is seriously engaged in the training of security forces inside Somalia, Uganda and neighbouring countries. Also, we very much thank the French Government, which also took part in that training. While we appreciate and commend

the efforts of Uganda and other neighbouring countries with regard to these training programmes, we believe that our troops would tend to be more effective if the training took place inside the country. Despite the serious engagement of AMISOM and its contribution to the attainment of peace and stability in Somalia, we believe that there is a need for the deployment of the remaining agreed strength of 8,000 AMISOM peacekeepers. We also believe that the deployment of adequate United Nations peacekeeping forces with a clear and relevant mandate and rules of engagement would contribute to the stabilization of Somalia and render AMISOM more effective.

My Government contends that peace, stability and security are a sine qua non for any meaningful socio-economic development and for the delivery of humanitarian assistance. The United Nations peacekeepers, if deployed, can achieve this with the help of the Government and AMISOM forces. Furthermore, my Government welcomes the deployment of forces from the East African Standby Brigade of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development. The military commanders of the Brigade recently visited Mogadishu to carry out assessments. We believe that their deployment will certainly enhance security in the country and contribute to the reconstruction of certain vital infrastructures.

In terms of the constitution-making process, the Government has embarked with the relevant stakeholders on building the capacities of the institutions that will be involved in the preparation of the draft constitution. The new members of the Independent Federal Constitutional Commission have been sworn in. Various stakeholders are now brainstorming on the constitution-making process.

Other priorities laid down by the Government with a view to finding a lasting solution to the crisis include the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the needy and the internally displaced; the formulation of a comprehensive national security strategy that would enable the Government to function more effectively in the midst of security threats unleashed by international terrorist groups; the consolidation of good governance, accountability, transparency and justice in the State institutions; the rebuilding of the infrastructure of the country that would ensure a sustainable economic recovery; the creation of alternative livelihood projects for the coastal communities and other areas to dissuade youth from piracy and other criminal activities, which we see as very important; and the strengthening of good relations, mutual understanding and cooperation among countries in the region.

I call upon the Security Council to act because we in Somalia indeed count on it. We thank it for its unwavering support. Over the past two decades, we have had reports, missions, statements, assessments, embargoes and a proliferation of conferences on the situation in Somalia. We believe that it is high time that we come up with a paradigm shift that would look at the situation differently.

It is our belief that, given meaningful collaboration in the security sector, we will be in a much better position to talk about and make progress in other important areas, such as humanitarian assistance, human rights, the prevention of piracy and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals.

Finally, let me go on record in appealing to United Nations Members and the Security Council to take an urgent decision to support, unequivocally, the Government of Somalia so that it can provide for the people of Somalia effectively. I am obliged to repeat that any small, hesitant, half-hearted measures of help and protracted delays will only increase the intransigence of the extremist die-hard elements, and that the converse is true. One may say that there are challenges and risks in the Somalia situation, but there are also enormous opportunities. In our view, the opportunities in Somalia far outweigh the risks. We hope and pray that we achieve a new momentum.

In that regard, we would like to cordially request that in future discussions on Somalia, the report of the Secretary-General be released in good time to enable all the stakeholders to have ample opportunity to discuss and consult as widely as possible within the framework of seeking solutions to the challenges facing Somalia, the region and, indeed, the international community.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Ramtane Lamamra, Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union.

Mr. Lamamra (*spoke in French*): I have the honour and privilege of speaking to the Council on behalf of the African Union Commission, and I am very glad to do so under Lebanon's presidency, a brother country whose issue contribute qualitatively to

the economic dynamism of many African countries and brand the promising exchanges between Africa and the Arab world with their own brilliance. I thank you, Mr. President, for having invited me to take part in this debate on developments in the situation in Somalia, a country that belongs to the African and Arab groupings and whose emergence from crisis involves the entire international community.

The year 2010 has been declared the Year of Peace and Security in Africa. It marks the fiftieth anniversary of Somalia's accession to independence. Nothing could better symbolize the success of the many activities and increasing efforts that the African Union has undertaken throughout this year than Somalia's decisive progress in promoting peace and reconciliation by fully restoring State authority through its territory and the ability of its institutions to exercise their sovereign prerogatives.

Nothing would more fully repay the innovative partnerships that have been established between Africa and the United Nations, as well as between Africa and the relevant countries and organizations, than the significant strengthening of operational capacities and effective synergies among all the actors and factors that seek to address all the challenges posed by the situation in Somalia and their enduring effects on international peace and security.

In fact, developments during the early months of the year show a generally positive trend towards achieving the goals whose attainment the international community is ensuring through its support for the ongoing action of Somalia's Transitional Federal Government under the authority of President Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, and the particularly perilous but very necessary and important work being done by the brave Burundi and Ugandan peacekeepers deployed within the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).

The agreement signed on 15 March between the Transitional Federal Government and the Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a movement at the headquarters of the African Union Commission can quite rightly be seen as a distinctive milestone in the strategic changes in the situation in Somalia. The agreement is of a character and scope that have considerable potential at the political, military and territorial levels and with regard to influencing the social, religious and cultural dynamics in the country.

While slow and still insufficient in terms of the urgency and the extent of the needs, the positive effects of the international community's multifarious contributions to Somalia's institutions and AMISOM are beginning to be felt. Programmes and projects that should in time lead to a fundamental change in Somalia's political and security landscape are being created or implemented.

In that regard, the development of the Somali security forces through quality training, the provision of functioning equipment and the standardized management of their operation and the careers of their staff, must receive high priority. At the same time, the standardization of AMISOM's logistical and operational norms and the conditions of service of its staff must be actively pursued to ensure that its change of status to a United Nations peacekeeping force is not unduly delayed for technical reasons.

The situation in Somalia calls for comprehensive and agreed strategies so that all contributions will be complementary and mutually reinforcing. These strategies should give issues of security in the current context of Somalia the importance they deserve and must also include the rebuilding of the State and its institutions and administrative instruments, as well as renewed humanitarian action and the implementation of development projects.

The mobilization of support for all of these purposes must increase. The follow-up to the Brussels conference; the Jeddah and Cairo meetings of the International Contact Group on Somalia which were facilitated by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, my friend Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, to whom I would like to pay a well-deserved tribute for all that he has done; the regular Addis Ababa meetings among the African Union, the United Nations, the troop-contributing countries and international partners; and the forthcoming Istanbul Conference: these are all to be welcomed for their importance and usefulness. The parallel activities on the issue of piracy at sea are also part of this same context insofar as the developing international consensus must focus on the elimination of the underlying causes of piracy, as well as proper coordination of the considerable naval forces deployed on the high seas with other forces that are also well endowed with the capacity to act and deter. AMISOM must be rapidly provided with such a capacity so that it can fight piracy and terrorism throughout its area of activity, including the maritime space of Somalia.

As it marks its fiftieth anniversary this year, Somalia is at a crossroads. Much has been done by the international community and by the Somalis themselves; just as much remains to be done. The promotion of peace, security and reconciliation in Somalia is ongoing, even with imperfect execution and incompletely met goals. However, we must build on the progress made and the results achieved and open up new horizons for the role of the international community, and especially the role of the United Nations, in and around Somalia. Relocating the United Nations and African Union facilities to Mogadishu would be a significant step in that direction.

For its part, the African Union will continue to share its vision and to make its contribution to increasing the effectiveness of our joint action and to bolster the credibility of our commitments through concrete results meeting the expectations of the Somali people and serving the comprehensive goals at stake in the situation in Somalia.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Ramtane Lamamra for his statement.

I shall now give the floor to members of the Security Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Parham (United Kingdom): I welcome First Deputy Prime Minister Ibrahim and Commissioner Lamamra to the Council this morning and thank them very much indeed for their briefings. I should also like to thank Mr. Ould-Abdallah, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his briefing. We greatly appreciate the efforts of the Special Representative, his team and all of the United Nations agencies active in Somalia.

I would, however, like to register our disappointment that the report of the Secretary-General (S/2010/234) was issued less than 24 hours before this meeting; Deputy Prime Minister Ibrahim made this same point too. Somalia is one of the most complex issues on the Security Council's agenda, and late reports do not help Council members take a considered view.

The situation in Somalia remains of deep concern, with a worsening humanitarian situation and continuing instability. We strongly condemn attacks against the Transitional Federal Government (TFG), the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the Somali people by armed groups, especially Al-Shabaab. We reiterate our support for the TFG and AMISOM. I pay particular tribute to Uganda and Burundi for their continuing commitment to this difficult operation.

There has been important progress on a number of strands over the past few months, as some of the previous speakers have highlighted. We welcome the signing of an agreement with Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a in March as an important step forward in terms of political reconciliation. But as the Secretary-General's report highlights, the situation remains fragile. We now have only 15 months remaining of the transitional period as defined in the Djibouti Agreement. Important transitional tasks still need to be completed. It is crucial that all parties redouble their efforts to achieve greater progress towards a stable and peaceful Somalia.

The instability in Somalia continues to have a significant destabilizing effect on the region and beyond. Somali extremists pose a serious threat to many countries, including the United Kingdom. We have seen close links between terrorists in Yemen and Somalia. Instability in Somalia hinders cooperation in the region on areas of common interest, promoting distrust rather than dialogue. Progress towards a peaceful, stable Somalia would allow the region to cooperate on the economic development that it so desperately needs.

But the most serious impact is on the people of Somalia themselves. They have suffered for far too long. The humanitarian situation is appalling and continues to deteriorate. Attacks on aid compounds, worsening security conditions and the threats by Al-Shabaab, which led the World Food Programme to suspend its operations, have all compounded the problem. We home the World Food Programme can resume its work safely as soon as possible in order to deliver the aid which is so desperately needed.

The United Kingdom is committed to supporting the TFG and AMISOM. Last year the United Kingdom contributed over £15 million to support AMISOM, £11.5 million in humanitarian aid and £26 million in development assistance. That is roughly equivalent to over $60 million in total.

On piracy, the United Kingdom plays an important role in the European Union's (EU) Operation Atalanta and we, of course, fully support the EU training mission currently underway in Uganda.

In looking forward, I would make three points. First, we need a strong United Nations lead for our efforts in Somalia. We welcome the Secretary-General's intention to review the role of the United Nations. This should lead to a more dynamic operation in Nairobi and a growing presence in Mogadishu, as both Special Representative Ould Abdallah and Commissioner Lamamra have said this morning. We do not underestimate the difficulties, but we need all parts of the United Nations working in an integrated manner to deliver a single strategy.

Secondly, the United Nations cannot work alone so the international community needs to regalvanize its efforts in support of AMISOM and the TFG. We look forward to the Istanbul Conference on Somalia on 22 May, which we hope will demonstrate the international community's continued support to the TFG and to United Nations leadership in Somalia.

Thirdly, the future of Somalia lies, ultimately, in the hands of the Somali people. We welcome the progress made by the TFG over the past few months. We urge them to continue and intensify their efforts on dialogue, reconciliation, governance and security sector reform. We call on all parties fully to support the Djibouti peace process and join efforts to bring peace to Somalia. The clock is ticking, and we risk losing the rare moment of opportunity provided by the Djibouti Agreement.

Ms. Anderson (United States of America): Let me begin by thanking Special Representative Ould Abdallah for his informative briefing. Let me also welcome Somali Deputy Prime Minister Ibrahim and Environment Minister Hamza to the Security Council and commend them for their dedication to the people of Somalia. I would also like to welcome to the Council Mr. Ramtane Lamamra, African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security, and express our appreciation for the African Union's work in Somalia.

The United States continues to view the situation in Somalia with deep concern. Somalia's stability depends on effective governance based on a process of inclusive political dialogue. As such, we underscore our support for the Djibouti peace process. The United States applauds the Transitional Federal Government for its recent efforts to build political support and cultivate stability, and we encourage the Transitional Federal Government to redouble those efforts.

The Djibouti peace process should remain the primary focus. We urge all groups interested in peace to come to the table. The agreement with Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a is an important step towards this goal. We welcome similar continued efforts to expand the Transitional Federal Government's message of stability, responsibility and inclusiveness. We also welcome the recent memorandum of understanding signed with the "Puntland" administration on counter-piracy cooperation.

We are similarly encouraged by the Transitional Federal Government's progress in drafting a new constitution and its efforts to open new schools, improve hospitals and renovate police stations. The Transitional Federal Government must strive to make even more progress on both its federal and transitional agendas by providing basic social services, working to build an integrated security force, extending a consultative constitutional process, building alliances and providing political support to regions. We hope it will also focus on other important goals such as expanding revenue collection, ensuring that salaries are paid to its security forces and providing young people with employment opportunities that offer viable alternatives to extremism and militancy.

The United States supports the upcoming United Nations development Conference on Somalia to be held in Istanbul in May with participation from the Somali diaspora. We commend the Turkish Government for its leadership on these critical issues, and we hope that this Conference will lead to critical investments in infrastructure and other projects that will provide Somali-led employment and training options for the Somali people.

With greater security, the Transitional Federal Government could make even greater gains. Spoilers continue to destabilize Somalia and risk its future. Recently, the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 751 (1992) concerning Somalia listed several of these spoilers for targeted sanctions, including Al-Shabaab and some of its leaders. We urge all Member States to effectively implement the asset freeze, the travel ban and the targeted arms embargo against the listed individuals and Al-Shabaab. We also urge all Member States to ensure that the territorial arms embargo is being fully implemented.

Supporting the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) is central to our strategy to stabilize

Mogadishu and support the Somali peace process. AMISOM protects key installations in Mogadishu, offers political space for a Somali-led reconciliation process and provides security so that humanitarian assistance can be delivered. We commend Uganda and Burundi for their generous troop contributions to AMISOM, including the recent addition of a fourth Ugandan battalion; the Mission now has a force of 6,200, closer to its mandated strength of 8,000. We encourage other nations to step forward with additional contributions.

The United States strongly supports AMISOM through funding for a logistical support package. Since AMISOM first deployed in 2007, the United States has obligated $174 million for logistical support, equipment and pre-deployment training to its forces. Both the Transitional Federal Government security forces and AMISOM have urgent equipment and training requirements that require donor support. The international community can express its gratitude to the troop-contributing countries by fulfilling the commitments made at the Brussels donor conference, including pledges to build the National Security Forces, the Somalia police force and the national security committee.

The United States is prepared to do its part by providing pre-deployment training and equipment to willing AMISOM troop-contributing countries. The United States also continues to support the development of a professional, effective national security force.

The international community must look for ways to safely make a greater impact within Somalia. We support the plans of the United Nations Political Office for Somalia to move towards a larger footprint in Somalia, which we believe will help the Transitional Federal Government make further progress.

Reports about the more frequent recruitment and use of children as soldiers in Somalia are appalling and a cause for great concern. The United States strongly condemns the exploitation of children by these groups to pursue violent agendas, and we call upon all parties to immediately release the children within their ranks and provide for their proper reintegration into civilian life. Basic civil liberties such as freedom of speech must be respected. The recent murder of Sheikh Nur Mohamed Abkey, a 30-year veteran journalist killed in Somalia this month is a tragic affront. The United States condemns this crime in the strongest terms.

We also condemn Al-Shabaab's recent moves to restrict freedom of speech by ordering radio stations to stop broadcasting news and music. These moves demonstrate the increasing isolation of Somalia's spoilers, who know that transparent political dialogue on the airwaves could eliminate their already meagre support.

Somalia continues to face a dire humanitarian situation. More than 3.2 million people need both food and non-food assistance. Several factors — consecutive seasons which have failed or poor rainfall, ongoing conflict, rising inflation, displacement and outbreaks of disease — have combined to severely worsen food security and drive up rates of acute malnutrition. Lack of security and stability further worsens the humanitarian situation.

The United States is committed to meeting the Somali people's humanitarian needs. We condemn the obstruction of access to aid for more than 1 million Somalis, by Al-Shabaab and other violent extremists. The deteriorating security situation in southern and central Somalia has steadily eroded areas in which humanitarian groups can operate. Targeted attacks on aid workers and on United Nations facilities as well as kidnappings and extortion have hampered attempts to provide life-saving humanitarian aid. We call upon all parties to ensure the unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance. For our part, the United States provide more than $150 million in food and non-food emergency assistance in 2009 to help meet the health, nutrition, protection, water, sanitation and hygiene needs of the Somali population.

The United States is committed to seeing peace and stability take hold in Somalia, for the Somali people, the region and the world. We encourage the Transitional Federal Government to keep up its momentum and to continue to chart a steady course towards the peaceful and prosperous future that Somalia deserves.

Mr. Apakan (Turkey): I would like to welcome His Excellency Mr. Abdurahman A. Ibrahim, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources of Somalia. I also extend our thanks to Mr. Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia, for introducing the report of the Secretary-General

(S/2010/234). I also welcome Mr. Ramtane Lamamra, Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union.

Of late, we have observed quite a number of positive developments in and concerning Somalia. The signing of the agreement between the Transitional Federal Government and the Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a on 15 March is undoubtedly the most notable. It is an important achievement and a result of the Transitional Federal Government's (TFG) efforts to reach out to all groups in the country. The full and speedy implementation of the agreement will be a crucial step, among others, to confirm what the international community has been saying: that there is no military solution to the Somali question, and the only road to a peaceful future is through the Djibouti peace process. This message must be repeated and firmly conveyed.

Despite the positive developments, the remaining challenges facing Somalia are far from negligible. Insecurity continues to be widespread in the country. My delegation is disturbed by the fact that attacks on civilians, human rights violations and acts of cruelty against women and children are, unfortunately, daily occurrences. Threats against humanitarian assistance, especially the blocking of World Food Programme operations in Somalia, are totally unacceptable.

We commend the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) for the crucial role it plays towards achieving stability in Somalia. We thank all troop- and police-contributing countries, especially Uganda and Burundi. We encourage the Department of Field Support to continue its support to AMISOM so that it can effectively implement its mandate. Expeditious deployment of the logistical support package is undoubtedly vital in that regard, yet one should not expect AMISOM to provide security alone. Therefore, it is also of crucial importance that the Somali security institutions be strengthened.

Successful completion of the transition in Somalia can be achieved only if the necessary political and security conditions are created, through targeted efforts coordinated between the Transitional Federal Government and the international community. The Transitional Federal Government, which Turkey fully supports and which it considers to be the only legitimate authority in Somalia, should continue its efforts to become more functional, while assertively pursuing its outreach policy vis-à-vis the opposition groups. One other critical task that the Transitional Federal Government should also complete is the drafting of a constitution. The progress achieved to date is promising in that regard.

Equally important is the maintenance of the support provided to Somalia by the international community. What has been accomplished so far is the outcome of our coordinated efforts over the past couple of years. These should be sustained. Turkey believes that stability in Somalia can be consolidated only if the gains in the political and security fields are supported by reconstruction activities.

That said, I would like to touch upon the Somalia conference which Turkey will host in Istanbul. The Istanbul Conference on Somalia will be jointly organized by the United Nations and the Turkish and Somali Governments, with the participation of the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, from 21 to 23 May. The high-level part of the Conference, which is expected to be attended by a number of heads of State or Government and Foreign Ministers, is aimed at demonstrating the commitment of the international community to the implementation of the Djibouti Agreement, which envisaged simultaneous progress in three areas: security, political cooperation and reconstruction. I want to underline in particular that this Conference is not being organized as a donor conference. The third day of the Conference will provide an opportunity for the Transitional Federal Government, Member States, the private sector and international business investors to engage, with a view to identifying future opportunities. It will also focus on recovery and reconstruction activities that aim at attracting direct investment for infrastructure projects that will strengthen the Somali economy, create employment and generate revenue. That will boost local business, lead to socio-economic development and contribute to the peace process. This is particularly pertinent when one considers that 3.2 million people — or 43 per cent of Somalis — still need humanitarian assistance.

We genuinely want the Istanbul Conference to make a change: a change in the future of Somalia, a change in the effective work of the Transitional Federal Government and a change in the lives of the Somali people, who have suffered a great deal in the past. From Istanbul, we hope to send a strong message of solidarity and to tell them that they are not alone.

Mr. Pankin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We too are grateful to Mr. Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia, for his briefing on the situation in Somalia. We listened with interest to the statements of Mr. Abdurahman A. Ibrahim, First Deputy Prime Minister of Somalia, and of Mr. Ramtane Lamamra of the African Union.

Broadly speaking, we agree with their assessment of the situation in Somalia. We agree also that there has been some success in the work of the Transitional Federal Government with respect to the peace process. The Government's social base is expanding slowly but surely as State authority grows stronger. Hence, we support Somali development by the Somalis themselves, on the basis of their own efforts.

At the same time, we are concerned about stability in the country. The irreconcilable opposition continues to attack Government positions, African Union troops and Somali forces. This undermines the efforts of the Transitional Federal Government to effectively govern the country. Even in the capital the extent of its influence is narrow, and in the central and southern parts of the country, extremists are in nearly total control. United Nations personnel, local people and humanitarian workers are in danger, which makes the humanitarian situation even more difficult than it already was.

The international community must continue to take agreed measures to provide assistance to the Transitional Federal Government in the areas of security and capacity-building, as it seeks to carry out its governance functions.

In the current situation, the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) is an important stabilizing factor in the country. In that regard, we, like others, want it to be fully staffed and provided with appropriate logistical support. We believe that, depending on the political situation and with the consent of the Somalis, that presence should continue as the United Nations presence gradually expands.

Along with the Secretary-General, we continue to advocate coordination of the work of United Nations agencies in Somalia. We agree that it is necessary to broaden the United Nations partnerships with other players and to pool efforts to overcome the security challenges in the peace process and to advance in the development process. Here, we welcome the Istanbul Conference on Somalia, to be held this month, which our Turkish colleague introduced in detail.

We support the Secretary-General's proposal to strengthen the Somalia sanctions regime. We believe, however, that targeted sanctions must be imposed on the basis of reliable and verified information.

With respect to piracy, Russia continues to be an active participant in international efforts to repel that threat. In our view, prosecution of pirates is a difficult problem. We stress that, as the relevant reports of the Secretary-General are prepared pursuant to Council resolution 1918 (2010), they should explore the possibility of establishing special judicial chambers or an international tribunal on piracy, taking international practice into account.

We believe that if there is to be a long-term solution for piracy the political process must continue and there must be renewal in Somalia. Russia supports the efforts of the Somali President and the Transitional Federal Government to achieve lasting peace and national reconciliation on the basis of the Djibouti Agreement, in the interest of strengthening security and stability in the region. We believe that the authority of the legitimate Government must be extended throughout the territory of Somalia, irrespective of the current political situation in particular regions.

Mr. De Rivière (France) (*spoke in French*): Let me begin by thanking Mr. Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and Mr. Abdurahman A. Ibrahim, First Deputy Prime Minister of the Transitional National Government, for their presentations. I also welcome the presence among us of Mr. Ramtane Lamamra, Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, and thank him for his statement.

I would recall France's full support for the Transitional Federal Government. We endorse the statement to be made by the representative of the European Union.

The situation in Somalia remains fragile. Whether we are talking about the humanitarian situation or the military situation, the attacks of the radical opposition on the Transitional Federal Government are ongoing. The Government successfully resisted such attacks, but the emergence from crisis has been slowed down.

With regard to the Istanbul Conference, in which the French minister will participate, should make it possible to start planning for ways to develop Somalia. The international community should support President Ahmed. We hope that the United Nations will be able, in accordance with the overall strategy overseen by the Security Council, to provide a permanent presence in Somalia, led by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, whose coordinating role has been recognized by the Council.

However, such progress presupposes that the Transitional Federal Government shall continue, with the help of the international community, to strengthen itself militarily. France has contributed to that end by training a battalion of 500 Somali soldiers. Other countries, such as Uganda and Djibouti, have done the same. This month, the European Union, with the participation of French soldiers, has begun to train 2,000 Somali soldiers in Uganda, in close cooperation with the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and other partners.

In this regard, it is critical to ensure that our efforts are sustainable and to coordinate them as much as possible with the activities of AMISOM. The African Union Mission, strengthened by a fourth Ugandan battalion and by new police officers, continues to give the Government indispensable support. I pay tribute to the courage of its personnel, and in particular the Ugandan and Burundian contingents. The support provided to AMISOM by the United Nations logistical support package, within the limits defined by the Council, should continue, as should the support of the major donors, either directly or through the various funds that have been set up. The United Nations also has different means for taking action at its disposal, such as international sanctions.

Following the adoption of resolution 1907 (2009) last December, the sanctions Committee decided to place a series of entities and individuals on the sanctions list, on the basis of resolution 1844 (2008), in order to signal our determination in a concrete manner. All these actions will have even greater impact now that the Transitional Federal Government has been strengthened by the political momentum it has sparked in the spirit of the Djibouti Agreement and through the agreement signed with Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a on 15 March. It is all the more urgent that the latter agreement be implemented and that the transitional Somali authorities show themselves to be united.

With respect to fighting piracy, the report of the Secretary-General (S/2010/234) shows that the number of attacks has decreased. We must continue to take action on the seas, and Operation Atalanta plays a major role in this effort. But we also have to expand our action on land, which will require helping the States of the region that have been victims of piracy to obtain the legal and financial means to prosecute and eventually convict and imprison the pirates.

We hail the efforts of the States of the region and encourage Kenya, Seychelles and Tanzania — as well as Somalia, of course — to redouble their efforts in this area, with the support, inter alia, of the Contact Group's Trust Fund to Support Initiatives of States Countering Piracy off the Coast of Somalia. The Fund has already decided to allocate more than €2 million. We call on donors to contribute to the Fund. France welcomes the agreement between the Transitional Federal Government and the authorities of Puntland in this regard. The High Representative of the European Union, Baroness Ashton, will soon visit the region in order to raise these and other issues, which the Council will take up again in late July.

Somalia is experiencing one of the most complex and dangerous crises ever. I recall in that regard that a French national has been held hostage there since July 2009. The European Union's ability to act there is particularly difficult. We must ceaselessly continue to work on improving our means of action. Accordingly, France will closely follow the results of the different investigations launched following the publication of the latest report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia (S/2010/91). I would stress that these difficulties make better coordination between the actions of the international community and the United Nations all the more necessary. I welcome the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to that end and to work for an integrated mission. France looks forward with great interest to hearing the Secretary-General's recommendations on these matters.

Mr. Du Xiaocong (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): Mr. President, I would like to thank you for convening today's open debate on the situation in Somalia. We welcome Mr. Ibrahim, First Deputy Prime Minister of Somalia. I thank Mr. Ould Abdallah, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his briefing. I also thank Mr. Lamamra, Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, for his statement.

Since the last briefing by Mr. Ould Abdallah to the Security Council, there has been no noticeable improvement in the situation in Somalia. The security situation there does not allow for optimism, the humanitarian crisis is worsening, and the political negotiation process has been difficult and slow. Pirate activities remain rampant. The situation in Somalia has thus become a serious threat to security and peace in the Horn of Africa and to international peace and security.

It is the view of the Chinese Government that the ultimate solution to the question of Somalia lies in the cessation of armed conflict among various factions, the settlement of political differences, and the achievement of national reconciliation and reconstruction. China supports the Djibouti Agreement and welcomes the agreement recently signed between the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and the Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a. It is our sincere hope that the political parties in Somalia will act in the interest of the State and the nation by laying down their arms, seeking common ground and participating in the political negotiation process. We call on all the concerned parties, including countries of the region, to cooperate in earnest, respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Somalia, offer support to the TFG, and advance the domestic political process of reconciliation so that substantive progress can be achieved as soon as possible.

China condemns all attacks on the TFG, the civilians of Somalia and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). We highly appreciate AMISOM's work to improve the security situation in Somalia in circumstances of extreme difficulty and danger. We also recognize the contribution of such troop-contributing countries as Uganda and Burundi. We believe that the United Nations, and the Security Council in particular, should play an even greater role in seeking a solution to the question of Somalia. We support the idea that the United Nations should maintain its assistance to AMISOM. We also support the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation in Somalia as soon as conditions permit.

The peace process in Somalia requires the unflagging attention and support of the international community. We welcome the upcoming Istanbul Conference on Somalia. We hope that greater common understanding can be reached at the Conference on an appropriate solution to the question of Somalia.

To conclude, I would like to thank Special Representative Ould Abdallah for his tireless efforts and hard work in promoting peace in Somalia in recent years. Every time he comes to the Council for a briefing, he reminds us of the urgency of finding a solution to the question of Somalia, which, in the current environment, has become particularly egregious. I would therefore like to reiterate that the Chinese Government is ready to make its own contribution to finding a solution to the question of Somalia. We shall continue to support Mr. Ould Abdallah's work.

Mr. Takasu (Japan): I, too, would like to thank Mr. Ould Abdallah for his briefing and exemplary work as Special Representative of the Secretary-General. I also welcome the presence of and briefings by Mr. Abdurahman Ibrahim of the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia (TFG) and Commissioner Lamamra.

A firm commitment was made by the international community a year ago at the donors conference in Brussels to support Somalia and, in particular, the TFG. One year later, we find that the situation in Somalia remains highly volatile and continues to be a source of deep concern. A quarter of the pledges made at Brussels have not yet been disbursed. The situation therefore requires a renewed commitment to translating the political compact into action.

First, we urge the TFG to continue to strengthen its efforts for political reconciliation and outreach. Japan commends the recent agreement between the TFG and Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a, which should be immediately put into force. We also hope that the TFG will continue to reach out to opposition groups to achieve more inclusive administration.

The institution-building effort of the TFG is crucially important. The training of and financial assistance to Somali security personnel are essential to building the Somali security institutions. The TFG's capacity for financial management and to provide basic services is also the basis for its governance. The major challenge is how to make those efforts persistent and sustainable. The international community must concentrate its assistance to the TFG. We must ensure that we stop any support to groups jeopardizing the peace process and prevent activities against the TFG.

The international community, for its part, should honour its commitment to supporting the efforts of the TFG. With respect to security, Japan commends the indispensable role played by the troops of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). We are pleased that the troop level has now reached 7,000 with the deployment of a fourth battalion by Burundi. Japan expresses sincere appreciation for the tremendous work done by the troops of Uganda and Burundi under very difficult conditions.

The deployment of seven AMISOM police personnel to train the Somali police in Mogadishu is a small but positive step. We hope that more police personnel will be deployed as soon as security conditions permit. Japan appreciates the valuable support of the logistical package provided by the Secretariat to AMISOM. We welcome the dissemination of balanced information through public radio. The efforts to train the military and police personnel of the TFG need to be accompanied by equipment and infrastructure support.

We hope that the most effective use will be made of the Trust Funds in support of AMISOM and Somali security institutions. Japan is pleased with the contributions that have been made to support these efforts. I add my voice to the appeal for the remaining 25 per cent of the pledges made at the Brussels conference to be disbursed as soon as possible.

Humanitarian assistance plays an indispensable role in the lives of millions of people in Somalia. Japan condemns the obstruction and intimidation by opposition groups to hinder the delivery of humanitarian assistance. It is our strong hope that the assistance provided through the World Food Programme will be fully implemented as soon as the independent review clarifies the allegations of misuse. We hope that the emergency rehabilitation project at the Port of Mogadishu, to be implemented by the World Food Programme with Japanese support, will contribute to efficient food delivery and customs revenues for the TFG. It will also be important to strengthen the cooperation between the TFG, Puntland and Somaliland with a view to long-term reconstruction and development throughout Somalia.

To achieve peace and stability in Somalia, the Security Council endorsed a three-stage incremental approach to provide support for AMISOM and the early establishment of a United Nations presence in Somalia. Improvement in security is of course a prerequisite to making progress in the three-stage approach. We hope that the TFG will make every effort to make effective use of international support and to strengthen its governance.

The issue of piracy off the coast of Somalia is closely linked to the situation on land. Regrettably, the incidents of piracy have not decreased in momentum. Those activities are now expanding East, far from the shore to the Somali Basin and close to the Seychelles. The fight against piracy requires a multifaceted and collective international approach. The efforts of the TFG, Somaliland and Puntland to coordinate their counter-piracy actions should be encouraged. The international community must support the stabilization of Somalia, capacity-building in neighbouring countries, and the creation of productive employment opportunities for young people.

Japan is committed to making active contributions, including at the upcoming meeting of the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia.

Mr. Lolo (Nigeria): I, too, welcome His Excellency Mr. Abdurahman Ibrahim and Mr. Lamamra to this meeting. I should like in particular to thank Mr. Ahmedou Ould Abdallah for his untiring work in Somalia, and more especially for the clear and comprehensive briefing that he gave this morning.

It is evident from the briefings we have received that the situation in Somalia remains dire. In spite of this, the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) is making progress. We commend the efforts of the TFG in spite of these difficulties. The consolidation of the process in Somalia, however, cannot be deepened in a situation in which the TFG faces severe budgetary gaps, the security environment remains volatile and unpredictable, the humanitarian situation is in fact worsening, piracy is on the increase and constraining economic challenges remain. It is in this regard that we believe that the remaining time before the end of the transition period will be pivotal and must be seized to facilitate the return of peace, security and stability to Somalia.

On the political front, there is a need for more progress in the drafting of the new constitution, based on consultations. We commend the agreement reached on 15 March with Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a, which is a milestone that should foster sustained political dialogue and the furtherance of the Djibouti

Agreement. There is also a need to intensify international support for the TFG in its effort to extend its authority internally, provide services and confront the security challenges in the country.

In the economic sector, there is a need to recognize Somalia's economic challenges and to support the TFG's efforts to generate revenue. I should like to echo a point made by Mr. Ould Abdallah this morning regarding the payment of fishing license fees to the TFG rather than to individuals as a concrete way to contribute to the generation of revenue in Somalia.

The international community must also focus attention on Somalia's economic development needs, especially job creation. The integration of the Somali economy into the wider regional economy should also be encouraged. These efforts should be complemented by the consistent delivery of humanitarian services. While we appreciate the immense contributions that have been made to Somalia, we lend our support to the Secretary-General's appeal to Member States to fulfil their financial pledges to the TFG, especially those made at the Brussels conference. Let me also add that we support the Istanbul conference to be convened on 22 May.

Stabilizing the security environment is vital for the strengthening of the Government and the building of State capacity and institutions in Somalia. Increased support is required for Somalia's security forces through strategic training, the provision of adequate resources for the payment of salaries, and the building of the national security and stabilization plan. Measures to fight piracy, deter foreign fighters and protect civilians and aid workers should be enhanced. The implementation of existing essential measures should also be improved.

Let me now reiterate our full support for the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and call for, first, the full implementation of the AMISOM support package; secondly, enhanced remuneration for AMISOM troops to bring it into line with United Nations rates; thirdly, reimbursement for transportation and other logistics provisions; and, fourthly, the establishment of a multilateral peacekeeping force in Somalia under the aegis of the United Nations and the African Union.

We welcome the Secretary-General's efforts to operationalize the joint planning unit to ensure the coherence and coordination of United Nations activities in the country. We look forward to his review of the implementation of the United Nations strategy for Somalia, which we hope will take into consideration the need to integrate the United Nations system in Somalia.

In conclusion, we salute the gallant men and women of the military forces of Uganda and Burundi for their efforts and commitment to the cause of peace in Somalia. We also salute the dedication of international aid and humanitarian workers in the country.

Mr. Heller (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): We welcome Mr. Abdurahman Ibrahim, First Deputy Prime Minister of Somalia, and his delegation, as well as Ambassador Lamamra, Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union. We listened very carefully to their briefings. We once again appreciate the valuable information provided by Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ahmedou Ould Abdallah. We acknowledge his commitment and that of his office to carrying out their arduous task.

We are concerned that, in spite of the efforts of the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia, assisted by the international community, the security situation in that country continues to be highly volatile. We commend the efforts of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the commitment of Uganda and Burundi to deterring attacks by armed groups and achieving basic levels of stability in key sites around the country. We are certain that support for the Transitional Federal Government in comprehensively reforming the security sector is the only viable way of ensuring the stability that Somalia and its people so urgently need.

We commend the work of the Joint Security Committee on devising a development strategy for the security sector. We also acknowledge the progress made in the training of military and police personnel. Moreover, we agree with the joint security sector assessment that reforming the sector should be based on a firm political pillar and include the promotion of good governance, transparency and accountability.

In that regard, we believe that the agreement between the Transitional Federal Government and the Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a political faction that was signed under the auspices of the United Nations Political Office for Somalia has set an important precedent for dialogue among all factions and armed

groups in the context of the Djibouti Agreement. The Agreement and the conclusion of Somalia's constitution-making process are essential steps towards consolidating and legitimizing the Government.

We believe that the meeting of the Contact Group held in Cairo in April and the high-level Istanbul Conference on Somalia's reconstruction and development, which is to be held from 21 to 22 May, will contribute to efforts to draft an international community strategy for Somalia that is more coherent and coordinated and led by the United Nations.

In that regard, we reiterate our support for the incremental approach to the deployment of the United Nations presence in Mogadishu. We commend the efforts of all the Organization's agencies involved in that regard. We trust that efforts in the political and security sectors will produce the results necessary to achieve greater progress.

With regard to the issue of combating piracy and armed robbery, we acknowledge the efforts of the European Union, NATO, Combined Task Force 151 and the international presence. In coordination with the Transitional Federal Government, they are confronting these threats to the economy and security of the region. We believe that generating coast guard capacity in Somalia and the countries of the region should continue to be an essential goal, without ignoring the clear need and strategic value of prioritizing efforts on the ground to tackle the root causes of this phenomenon. In that regard, the dialogue focused on greater cooperation and cooperation among officials of the various Somali regions is a great step forward.

With regard to the recent adoption of resolution 1918 (2010), we look forward to the Security Council's consideration of options with regard to possible justice mechanisms with respect to piracy. My delegation believes that the international community should endeavour to prioritize capacity-building for international judicial systems so that they can investigate and try perpetrators of piracy in Somalia. We also believe that, as an essential tool for combating piracy, the strengthening of national capacities should take priority over the establishment of international tribunals.

We join others in condemning attacks against AMISOM and the humanitarian workers of United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations. Such attacks have led to a reduction in assistance efforts and impede the access of vulnerable groups to basic needs and the nutrition needed to survive. Given the serious insecurity we see on the ground and its regrettable impact on the civilian population, we reiterate our commitment to full respect for international humanitarian law and human rights. We call on the parties to immediately cease attacks, avoid situations that indiscriminately affect the civilian population, and allow access to and the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

In addition, we are especially concerned about reports of increased recruitment and use of child soldiers by armed groups in Somalia. We urge all parties to free all child soldiers in their ranks and to ensure that they return to their home communities. We also commend all the efforts of the Federal Transitional Government to address this alarming recruitment situation.

In the context of the sanctions Committee on Somalia and Eritrea, my delegation reiterates its belief that, used coherently and incrementally, arms embargos and targeted sanctions regimens are valuable tools that can benefit the peace process as a whole. In that regard, we are pleased to note the willingness demonstrated by the Transitional Federal Government, the World Food Programme and the United Nations country team in Somalia to look into aspects pertaining to their functions referred to in the annual report of the Committee's Monitoring Group (S/2010/91). Both the Committee and the Monitoring Group are fully prepared to cooperate with these investigations and interested in their conclusions.

In the context of this cooperation, I recently led a visit to the Horn of Africa in my capacity of Chairman of the sanctions Committee, as recommended by that Committee. The purpose of the visit was to disseminate information about the sanctions regime, to facilitate the work of the Committee's Monitoring Group, and to address specific issues related to the arms embargo and sanctions targeted against entities and individuals, inviting all involved Governments to cooperate with the Committee and the Security Council.

In the next few weeks, I will be presenting a report to the Committee on my visit to the region, which will be included in the report I submit every four months to the Security Council. I can state now that the visit enabled us to establish positive and constructive dialogue with each of the regional actors, in

accordance with the Committee's mandate, as well as to observe the outstanding work that the United Nations is carrying out in the field in the face of the major challenge that Somalia poses for the international community.

Ms. Čolaković (Bosnia and Herzegovina): At the outset, I would like to join my colleagues in welcoming the First Deputy Prime Minister of Somalia, His Excellency Mr. Abdurahman Ibrahim, and in thanking him for his important statement. I further wish to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ould Abdallah, for his extremely useful briefing. Our thanks also go to Mr. Lamamra, Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union.

Bosnia and Herzegovina aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of the European Union to the United Nations later today.

We would like to reiterate our full support to the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and the Djibouti peace process, and call upon all relevant actors to fully implement the commitments undertaken. Having said this, we would like to emphasize that the cooperation and assistance of the international community to the TFG are crucial, and that every resource should be used to generate the necessary political and security conditions for the successful completion of the transition by 2011.

We note with satisfaction the progress in some key areas identified in the Secretary-General's report (S/2010/234), particularly in the field of national reconciliation, the drafting of the constitution, capacity-building, the building of national security forces and expanding political space in the country.

In that context, we further welcome the signing of the cooperation agreement between the TFG and Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a, and we hope that this change will contribute to the Government's capacity to consolidate its authority and restore order in the country. We urge all groups outside the Djibouti peace process to join in as soon as possible.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is concerned about the security situation in Somalia, especially in the southern and central parts of the country. We strongly condemn the continuing indiscriminate attacks against the civilian population, the TFG and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).

We are deeply concerned by the fact that the recruitment and use of children in the conflict have increased in the past year. We therefore urge all parties to the conflict to fully comply with international humanitarian law and human rights law in order to protect the civilian population.

Bosnia and Herzegovina further expresses its concern regarding the alarming humanitarian crisis in Somalia, which is exacerbated by the severe difficulties in the delivery of humanitarian assistance caused by increased violence against humanitarian workers, ongoing fighting and drought. We hope that adequate funding of the consolidated appeals process and the United Nations transition plan for Somalia will allow for the continuation of critical humanitarian activities.

Once more, Bosnia and Herzegovina would like to commend the African Union and AMISOM troops for their tireless efforts in stabilizing the situation in Somalia, despite the extremely difficult environment in which they are operating. We would like to pay a special tribute to Uganda and Burundi for the vitally important contribution they are making to AMISOM.

Bosnia and Herzegovina welcomes the important efforts made by the TFG in preparing its own security sector assessment report and the national security and stabilization plan, which are intended to ensure coherence in developing the security and justice sectors. In that regard, we encourage the fulfilment of pledges made at the international conference in support of Somalia's security institutions and AMISOM, held in Brussels on 23 April 2009.

In order to achieve lasting peace and stability, we urge the TFG to build on this positive momentum and intensify its efforts, especially in the areas of political reconciliation and outreach, the constitution-making process, security, stability and the delivery of services. Moreover, it is of crucial importance for the international community to use this window of opportunity to strengthen the effectiveness of its presence in the country by further coordinating its actions.

Bosnia and Herzegovina supports the three-phase incremental approach, as set out by the Secretary-General. We welcome the completion and approval of the first accommodation facilities in a Bancroft compound with regard to establishing the second "light footprint" phase.

We also welcome the Istanbul Conference on Somalia to be held on 22 May 2010, and hope that it will foster political stability, security and reconstruction in the country.

On the fight against piracy, Bosnia and Herzegovina shares the position expressed by other Council members that long-term solutions will come only through the rule of law and the establishment of security on the ground.

In conclusion, please allow me to highlight an issue we deem exceptionally important. Bosnia and Herzegovina welcomes important efforts of the United Nations Mine Action Service to reduce the dangers of mines to the civilian population, including mapping mine contamination throughout southern and central Somalia and mine risk education sessions in communities affected by mines and unexploded ordnance.

Mr. Issoze-Ngondet (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, Gabon welcomes the initiative of your country, Lebanon, to organize a debate on Somalia, a country where the situation remains troubling on the political, security and humanitarian fronts.

We welcome the participation in this important debate of His Excellency Mr. Abdurahman Ibrahim, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources of Somalia. His informative statement has of course provided us with useful information on recent developments in his country. It strengthens our enduring confidence in the ability of Somalia to take up the many challenges ahead.

My delegation would also like to thank Mr. Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for the clarity and high quality of his presentation of the report of the Secretary-General (S/2010/234) and for his consistent commitment to peace and reconciliation in Somalia. I also naturally welcome the participation of the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, my friend and brother Mr. Ramtane Lamamra, who has shared with us the African Union's views on the matter.

As members know the situation in Somalia is of the highest concern to Africa and the international community, which are making tireless efforts to restore peace and stability there. We are firmly convinced that regular wide-ranging discussions on the Somali crisis, such as the one that will take place in Istanbul from 21 to 23 May 2010, can help the Security Council to better assess progress on the ground and the further initiatives to take in order to best continue restoring the Somali State.

The Somali crisis is first and foremost political and institutional in nature. Thus, the country will find a lasting solution only through further emphasis being placed on restoring State authority and strengthening the peace process.

In that regard, my country reiterates its support for the Djibouti peace agreement, signed on 19 August 2008. Thus, we praise the efforts of the Transitional Federal Government to fully implement that agreement, as shown by an agreement signed between the Transitional Federal Government and the Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jama'a resistance movement at the headquarters of the African Union on 15 March. That outreach initiative is undeniable progress, greatly welcomed, moreover, by the International Contact Group on Somalia at its meeting in Cairo on 21 and 22 April 2010.

The Somali authorities must continue dialogue with the insurgent groups so as to bring them into the peace process and to actively seek ways to achieve reconciliation and a lasting peace. Hence, the Security Council, and the international community in general, must continue to support to the Transitional Federal Government in order to strengthen its authority throughout the territory.

This is the place to encourage the implementation of the Trust Fund for Somalia and the full honouring of the pledges made at the April 2009 Brussels conference. Along the same lines, we should encourage a stronger presence of the international community and greater coordination of its action with the Transitional Federal Government in Mogadishu.

The signing of a memorandum of understanding last April by the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the United Nations Political Office for Somalia seeks precisely to facilitate the coordination on the ground of the action of the signatories with regard to protecting civilians, in particular women and children.

The crisis in Somalia is also a security crisis. Armed violence must be stopped, in particular the fighting between the regular army and the insurgents. In a word, the international community must participate in securing the country.

My delegation commends the significant role that the African Union Mission in Somalia continues to play, despite the difficult conditions it faces owing both to the environment and to its operational capacities. Despite the broad consensus enjoyed by the Transitional Federal Government within the international community, the support provided to AMISOM, which barely comprises the required 8,000 soldiers, unfortunately has still not enabled its optimal deployment. The human and logistical resources necessary for its mission are still lacking.

My delegation wishes to reiterate its hearty congratulations to Uganda and Burundi, which, despite those extremely difficult conditions, have agreed to provide troops to AMISOM. Those congratulations also go to Djibouti, which last January decided to make 450 soldiers available to the Mission. Lastly, I extend our gratitude to the other countries which, from near or far, contribute in various ways to the viability of that African operation.

However, AMISOM is not forever. I would like to believe that sooner or later it will be bolstered or replaced by a true United Nations peacekeeping operation, whose modalities could be defined in consultation with the African Union.

Recalling that the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security lies with the Security Council, my delegation is convinced that a larger United Nations presence in Somalia would help improve the security conditions required for a successful transition by 2011.

In the medium term, securing the country is a task that must return to the Somali army. The optimal discharge of such a mission requires that the troops be well trained and that the army must be closer to the communities. Here, the challenge is to form a truly national army. We welcome the initiative recently taken by the European Union to establish, in Uganda, a training programme for the Somali armed forces. Such initiatives should be duplicated with the help of the African Union and undertaken as part of a national action plan developed by the Somali authorities.

In that regard, as indicated in the report under consideration, we welcome the current efforts of the Transitional Federal Government to prepare a report to assess the security sector and the implementation of the national security and stabilization plan.

Acts of piracy against ships at sea are a threat not only to the security of other States in the region, but also to international navigation and the safety of commercial maritime routes. We support all initiatives seeking to improve the fight against piracy in the territorial waters of Somalia and the Gulf of Aden and to bring to justice those guilty of acts of piracy.

Gabon is among those that believe that piracy at sea is simply a result of the insecurity prevailing on Somali territory. It is therefore logical to approach this issue in a comprehensive way and to give high priority to resolving the internal situation.

I cannot end my statement without mentioning the humanitarian crisis hitting Somalia, which is one of the worst that Africa has ever experienced. Some 20 years of violence and anarchy have caused at least 2 million Somali citizens to flee for their life. The assistance provided by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, UNICEF, the World Food Programme and other partners, whose indispensability we recognize and whose work on the ground we welcome, unfortunately still proves insufficient owing both to a lack of resources and to security constraints that make the needy populations' access to food aid difficult. It is therefore essential to step up efforts to support the action of humanitarian organizations on the ground.

Regarding Somalia's reconstruction, the international community's support must also take into account the country's economic development, in particular restoring infrastructure, providing basic services, promoting trade and business and creating jobs.

Mr. Rugunda (Uganda): I thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Ould Abdallah, for his briefing. I also welcome the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources of Somalia, Mr. Abdurahman Ibrahim, and thank him for updating the Council on the current developments in Somalia. It is clear that while much has been achieved so far, many challenges still remain. Let me also welcome Mr. Ramtane Lamamra, Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, and thank him for his useful statement.

Uganda reaffirms its support for the Djibouti peace process, as it represents the best opportunity for lasting peace in Somalia.

We commend the efforts made by the Transitional Federal Government towards advancing the political process in the country, and we support its continued commitment to reaching out to opposition groups in the search for lasting peace. The signing of the 15 March agreement between the Government and Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a was a significant achievement. We encourage the Transitional Federal Government to further build on that success towards forming an all-inclusive government.

The building of State institutions is critical for effective governance and for security, as well as for the stability of Somalia. Uganda commends the efforts of the Transitional Federal Government towards the rebuilding of State institutions, including the security and judicial sectors and the collection of revenue. However, major challenges still remain within those and other sectors. It is imperative that the international community extend more support to the Government to help it overcome these challenges and extend its authority over more territory.

The security situation in Somalia remains a serious challenge. The primary responsibility for ensuring peace and security in Somalia rests with the Transitional Federal Government and the Somali people themselves. For this to happen, the country requires well trained and well equipped armed and police forces. Retention of these forces is critical; to achieve that, the forces need to be remunerated in a predictable and sustainable way. Other critical areas that require support include health, education, energy, fisheries and infrastructure. These need to be addressed urgently in order to change the situation on the ground. We call on the international community to assist the Transitional Federal Government in that regard.

The success of the efforts of the Transitional Federal Government in unifying and reconstructing the country will depend significantly on the availability of adequate and predictable resources. We therefore call upon the international community to continue supporting the Transitional Federal Government. In that regard, we welcome the Istanbul Conference on Somalia, to be held from 21 to 23 May. The Conference will offer Somalia and the international community an opportunity to review progress and challenges in the areas of security, political reconciliation and the reconstruction of the country.

It is also important to continue the efforts towards bringing the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) to its authorized troop level of 8,000, to enable it fully to discharge its mandate. We appreciate the support that has been extended to AMISOM through the logistical support package, the trust fund and bilateral arrangements. One of the challenges that remain is to provide reimbursement for all contingent-owned equipment. In that regard, we call for predictable and timely provision of funds and other resources.

Piracy remains a major challenge off the coast of Somalia, as evidenced by recent incidents. This situation remains, in spite of the significant efforts of the international community to deploy substantial naval assets off the coast of Somalia to combat piracy. This is a reminder that, as long as there is instability on the mainland, the problem of piracy will persist. It is important that the Transitional Federal Government be assisted in establishing authority over its territory, as this will ensure a durable way of combating piracy off the coast of Somalia.

Finally, we thank Mr. Ould Abdallah and the staff of United Nations and humanitarian agencies for their work in difficult conditions. It is important that arrangements be made for the relocation to Somalia of the United Nations Support Office for AMISOM, the United Nations Political Office for Somalia and other United Nations agencies based in neighbouring countries. That will help strengthen the Government and will also send a clear signal of further support by the international community to the people of Somalia.

Mrs. Viotti (Brazil): I welcome Mr. Abdurahman Ibrahim, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Fisheries and Maritime Resources of Somalia, and thank him for his remarks. I also thank Mr. Ould Abdallah for his briefing and for his commendable work as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia. I welcome African Union Commissioner Lamamra and thank him for his statement. Through him, I would like to convey our appreciation to the African Union for its support to Somalia.

The Transitional Federal Government (TFG) has been able to withstand fierce armed opposition and to make progress in some important areas of the Djibouti process and the transitional agenda. Nevertheless,

many challenges still remain on the path towards a peaceful, stable and prosperous Somalia.

The signing on 15 March of the framework agreement between the Transitional Federal Government and Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a was an important achievement in the reconciliation policy adopted by President Sharif. We look forward to the implementation of the agreement and urge other armed groups to renounce violence and join the Djibouti process. The decision by the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea to list Al-Shabaab and eight individuals should be seen as a wake-up call to all recalcitrant groups.

Unity within and among the Transitional Federal Institutions will remain essential to achieving further progress towards peace and stability.

The security situation in Somalia remains a matter of great concern, despite progress in international support for the restructuring of Transitional Federal Government security forces and for the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). My delegation deplores, in particular, the attacks against that Mission, including the one directed against its headquarters on 27 April. We once again pay tribute to the troops from Uganda and Burundi for their contribution to the stabilization of Somalia. We are encouraged by the efforts of several Member States to train, equip and fund AMISOM troops and Transitional Federal Government security forces. We note, in particular, the launching of the European Union training mission to Somalia.

We are encouraged by the progress reported by the Secretary-General regarding United Nations activities in Mogadishu. We hope that security and political conditions will be soon in place to allow for a more substantive United Nations presence in the capital.

As the Transitional Federal Government rebuilds its security forces, steps must be taken to avoid the civilian population continuing to bear the brunt of the conflict. Fleeing conflict zones, such as Mogadishu, is not always a guarantee against violence. We strongly condemn the taking of a medical compound by armed groups on 7 May. Blatant disregard for the principle of distinction was also displayed in the attack against the mosque in the Bakara market, on 2 May, which killed and injured scores of innocent people.

Against this background, it is disquieting to learn that World Food Programme operations Somalia remain suspended in all of south-central Somalia except Mogadishu and that the World Health Organization has had to reduce its activities in the country due to lack of funding. In addition, it is disturbing to learn that the 2010 consolidated appeal is only 15 per cent funded.

Resolution 1918 (2010) represents an important step against piracy. We encourage all stakeholders to engage with Kenya in addressing its concerns with regard to its efforts to fight impunity at sea. Brazil also welcomes the establishment of a regional centre to prosecute suspected pirates in Seychelles. Not only States from the region but all affected States, including flag States and States of the nationalities of victims, have a common responsibility in tackling the problem.

I should also stress that a comprehensive solution to piracy off the coast of Somalia will be achieved only by addressing its root causes on land, as has been pointed out by many delegations this morning. In this regard, Brazil is encouraged by the increasing cooperation on anti-piracy between the TFG, Somaliland and Puntland noted in the Secretary-General's report (S/2010/234). This could also build confidence and have a positive influence on other core issues related to Somalia's future.

Before concluding, I would like to say a few words on reconstruction and development. Progress in revenue collection and the TFG's renewed focus on delivering basic services and rehabilitating infrastructure are commendable. Tending to the fundamental needs of the population and fostering income generation are as important as the restructuring of security forces. Socio-economic development can greatly reduce the appeal of the insurgency and the pirate militias. The TFG should be actively supported in this regard, including through capacity-building. We welcome the convening of the Istanbul Conference on Somalia and look forward to its outcome.

The situation in Somalia is among the most difficult challenges on the Security Council's agenda. The partnership between the TFG and the international community should be strengthened. It has already borne some fruit and is the most promising way to peace and stability in the Horn of Africa.

Mr. Ebner (Austria): I would like to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ould

Abdallah for his briefing today. I also highly welcome the participation in this debate of His Excellency Mr. Abdurahman Ibrahim, First Deputy Prime Minister of Somalia, and of His Excellency Mr. Ramtane Lamamra, Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union.

At the outset, let me underline that Austria fully aligns itself with the statement of the European Union that will be delivered later today.

Austria highly welcomes the fact that, despite the difficult security and humanitarian situation, Somalis have made some progress in the Djibouti peace process. Austria commends the signing of the agreement with Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a. Now the focus should be on its implementation and further outreach, with a special focus on a bottom-up approach taking into account the firmly rooted clan structure of Somali society.

Austria would like to once again confirm its support for the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and the continuation of the political process, which should be as broad-based as possible. We hope that the TFG, with the support of the international community, will be able to assume in unity its responsibilities to build security and rule of law institutions and to embark on a reconciliation process.

Let me also underline the important contribution of African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), its troop-contributing countries Uganda and Burundi, the United Nations support package for AMISOM, as well as the substantial support of the European Union (EU) to AMISOM in bringing security and stability to the country. I would also like to highlight that the EU has decided to step up its engagement to promote peace and development in Somalia and last month launched a training mission in Somalia to contribute to the training of Somali security forces.

We welcome the proposal contained in the Secretary-General's report (S/2010/234) to review the implementation of the United Nations strategy for Somalia and are looking forward to the presentation of the results to the Security Council. It is indeed important to better coordinate the work of the United Nations entities on Somalia. We also look forward to the upcoming Istanbul Conference on Somalia.

We are very concerned about the fragile security situation and the impact of this environment on the humanitarian and human rights situation. Some 3.2 million people, almost half of Somalia's population, are in need of humanitarian assistance. Food insecurity and restricted humanitarian access exacerbate the situation. Concerning any irregularities in the management of humanitarian aid raised in the report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia (S/2010/91), we consider it of utmost importance that they be investigated and addressed properly. Humanitarian deliveries must resume as soon as the security situation allows. At the same time, I would like to reiterate Austria's appreciation for the dedication and engagement of the many humanitarian workers who accept high risks in order to alleviate the plight of the civilian population in Somalia.

The human rights situation in Somalia continues to be very problematic. We are extremely concerned about the devastating consequences of the armed conflict on civilians and the continued impunity for human rights violations and abuses. We call upon all parties to ensure the protection of civilians in compliance with human rights law and international humanitarian law. We also reiterate our condemnation of the recruitment of children by armed groups and our request that they be released immediately. We warmly welcome the TFG's measures to focus on the protection of human rights as an essential element of the peace process. We are also very encouraged by the TFG's intention to ratify the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Austria firmly condemns recent terror attacks, and we are deeply worried about foreign support to the insurgents. All Security Council resolutions, including those that impose targeted sanctions and an arms embargo, must be implemented fully and in good faith. These measures are directed not against the people of Somalia, but against those who threaten peace security or stability.

The security situation for the Somali population is still unacceptable and does not allow for the provision of urgently needed help for the people. The abundance of arms and armed groups is also a root cause of the surge in piracy. It is important to see piracy not only as a threat to key international shipping lanes, but also as a factor further aggravating the security and humanitarian situation in Somalia. Austria therefore stresses the importance of determined activities to curb piracy in the region, such as the EU's naval Operation Atalanta.

Finally, we also hope that in the future the report of the Secretary-General will be issued within a time frame that allows it to be fully taken into account in preparation for the debate.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of Lebanon.

Once again, I welcome His Excellency Mr. Abdurahman Ibrahim, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources of Somalia, and thank him for his important statement. I also thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, for his thorough briefing.

Lebanon supports the Djibouti peace process and welcomes recent positive political developments, including the signing of an agreement between the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia and Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a. We hope that the approach to the situation in Somalia, where 43 per cent of the population needs humanitarian assistance, will not be limited to fighting rebellions and efforts in the area of security, although these issues are very important, but will also include the consolidation of institutions and development aid.

We would like to make the following points. With respect to security, we are very concerned by recent acts of violence, militia attacks against the Government and clashes among the insurgents themselves, which have resulted in a number of innocent casualties. These conflicts show that we need to equip and support the regular army of Somalia as soon as possible in order to extend State authority throughout Somali territory and to reintegrate deserters and defectors from the army. We welcome the Government's national security plan and urge donors to approve assistance to build up the Somali security services and to ensure that they are duly paid.

As to piracy, we condemn all acts of piracy and armed robbery, which pose a serious threat to trade, international navigation and the delivery of humanitarian assistance. We affirm the importance of resolution 1918 (2010) and thank the States that have sent ships into the territorial waters of Somalia and the Gulf of Aden. We hope that this increased international presence will uncover new information on illegal fishing and the dumping of industrial waste along the Somali coast. We support Mr. Ould Abdallah's proposal regarding fishing license fees. We reiterate that addressing the underlying causes of piracy would help to establish a firm and lasting foundation for economic development and the elimination of poverty in Somalia, and that comprehensive implementation of the political process remains the key to resolving the piracy issue.

On the issue of financial support, Lebanon thanks the donors that have largely honoured the commitments they made in Brussels in 2009 and calls on them to go beyond that assistance in response to the 2010 humanitarian appeal.

On the humanitarian situation, Lebanon condemns insurgent attacks on humanitarian workers. We are concerned over the evidence of children abducted by armed groups and especially alarmed by the threats made against journalists.

On the issue of the three-phased incremental approach, we support the early implementation of the second phase of that process in order to strengthen the United Nations presence in Somalia and thereby send a strong message of support from the Security Council for the Djibouti peace process.

With respect to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), in the absence of an international presence we call on donors to contribute to financing AMISOM, and we praise the contributions of the African Union and of AMISOM towards establishing sustainable peace in Somalia. We thank Uganda and Burundi for their contributions to that end and the international community for its efforts.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Norway.

Mr. Wetland (Norway): Norway is a founding member of the International Contact Group on Somalia and we chair the Group of Friends here in New York.

The Djibouti process is a Somali process. It is owned and driven by Somalis. The Transitional Federal Institutions should be driving the process and should do so with a unified approach. Norway applauded the agreement between the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a in March. We also commended the new agreement between the TFG and Puntland. We are watching a political transition in Somalia. It is important that the door remain open to others. However, implementing agreements is even more important than signing them, and the TFG should be urged to address this with seriousness.

Taking into account the approaching end of the transition period in August 2011, efforts have to be redoubled with regard to improving the security situation, giving impetus to the political process, and improving the lives of children, women and men in Somalia. We recognize that the TFG is facing very serious constraints and challenges, and we also realize that the international community may not have been as forthcoming with support and assistance as expected by the TFG.

Norway has recently and for the first time transferred a small amount of our support to the TFG directly through the Central Bank of Somalia. This is basically a test case to see if it works in a way that satisfies the rules and regulations that we must observe when disbursing public funds. In other words, we wish to see this money create improved services in the city of Mogadishu. If we do, we will give more.

Although the main aim is to bring an end to the perennial humanitarian crisis in Somalia, Norway shall continue to be a major partner with regard to humanitarian assistance to Somalia. We want to commend the United Nations for taking steps to address the allegations in the latest report of the sanctions Committee's Monitoring Group on Somalia (S/2010/91).

We shall also continue our active support to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, the implementation of the Djibouti process, and the peace and reconciliation efforts in general, in close cooperation with the United Nations, as well as with the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development.

Realizing the paramount importance of the security issue in Somalia, we commend the efforts and sacrifices of the African Union and others, particularly the countries contributing troops and police to the African Union Mission in Somalia — Uganda and Burundi — in assisting the attempts of the TFG to stabilize the situation in the country, and we urge other countries that are in a position to do so to follow their lead. Peace and stability in Somalia are important not only to the Somalis themselves, but also to the entire Horn of Africa and far beyond.

Norway has also been very active in countering piracy off the coast of Somalia. We have deployed a frigate to the region and chaired the last meeting of the Contact Group. Norway is also a substantial donor to the Trust Fund established here at the United Nations. Encouraging progress has been made and we look forward to continuing to work with other States and regional organizations on this matter.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I give the floor to Mr. Pedro Serrano, acting head of the delegation of the European Union to the United Nations.

Mr. Serrano: Let me thank you, Sir, for inviting the European Union (EU) to this timely and important debate. I also thank His Excellency Mr. Abdurahman Ibrahim, First Deputy Prime Minister of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of Somalia, for his important statement. He can rest assured of the EU's continued commitment to assisting Somalia. I also offer many thanks to African Union Commissioner Lamamra and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, for their presentations and very valuable work.

The candidate countries Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey' the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia; as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova align themselves with this declaration.

In the interest of brevity, let me summarize the main points of the written statement that has just been circulated. The continued deadly attacks against the Somalia peace process, the TFG and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) are wreaking havoc on the lives of Somalia's population. A comprehensive approach that incorporates reconciliation and outreach, security and development, human rights and cohesive governance is essential for tackling the challenges facing Somalia. The international community must therefore remain actively engaged.

In 2009, the European Union enhanced its comprehensive approach to the region by adopting the European Union Horn of Africa policy. In pursuit of this policy, the European Union is now stepping up its engagement in support of the stabilization and development of Somalia. High Representative Ashton will shortly visit the region to reaffirm the European Union's commitment to the fight against piracy and to explore the prospect of deepened cooperation with the countries of the region.

The European Union welcomes recent efforts of the TFG and partners within Somalia to join together in ensuring broad-based stabilization and recovery at the federal, regional and local levels. The agreement between the TFG and Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a, signed in Addis Ababa on 15 March 2010, is particularly significant. The implementation of such commitments could be the stepping stone towards the completion of the outstanding transitional federal tasks pursuant to the transitional federal charter and the Djibouti Agreement of 2008. The international community should stand ready to support this process.

Meanwhile, it is important that the TFG continue its outreach efforts in the framework of the Djibouti Agreement to enlarge the political base of the Government. The Transitional Federal Institutions should continue to work constructively to address the enormous challenges ahead. As the International Contact Group has underlined, it is also important to increase financial transparency and accountability.

I pay tribute to the tireless efforts of the United Nations and the African Union and their respective Special Representatives, Ambassador Ould Abdallah and Ambassador Diarra, to bring peace to Somalia. The European Union has provided about €90 million to the African Union Mission in Somalia since its establishment in 2007. Uganda and Burundi are playing an essential role in implementing that mission. Hopefully other countries will join forces with them in contributing to AMISOM.

On 7 April 2010 the European Union launched a military training mission in Somalia. The objective of this initiative, in line with resolution 1872 (2009), is to support the Transitional Federal Institutions of Somalia through the training of 2,000 Somali recruits. This contribution to the sustainable development of the Somali security sector should help provide a more secure living environment for ordinary Somalis. Operating in close cooperation and coordination with international partners, particularly the United Nations and the African Union, this training mission will be carried out in Uganda, where Somali forces are already undergoing instruction. I would like to thank the Ugandan Government for its active assistance to the European Union in this regard. I would also like to acknowledge the valuable support provided by the United States in key areas.

The European Union is aware that the fight against piracy off the coast of Somalia requires continued and comprehensive engagement. The European Union welcomes the work of the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia. The European Union naval operation, Operation Atalanta, launched in accordance with relevant Security Council resolutions, is producing positive results, and its mandate has recently been extended. The forthcoming General Assembly debate on piracy will provide an occasion to discuss these initiatives further. Atalanta's Operational Commander, Admiral Peter Hudson, will be one of the speakers. Effective means of bringing suspected pirates to justice are essential to a comprehensive approach, and neighbouring countries are to be commended for the assistance they have provided in this regard.

It is important that the international approach to Somalia remain strategic, looking beyond urgent support to the security sector to also address longer-term development needs. The European Union has committed €215 million to development aid for the period 2008 to 2013, making the EU — together with its member States — the biggest donor to Somalia. Particular attention is being paid to governance, security and support to civil society, education, the productive sectors and rural development. In addition, the European Union will provide €35 million in humanitarian aid to Somalia in 2010.

The international Conference on Somalia to be held in Istanbul at the end of May will offer us a fresh opportunity to address the various aspects of this crisis. It should give renewed impetus to international engagement in Somalia in the political, economic and social fields. The European Commissioner for Development, Mr. Andris Piebalgs, is planning to participate in the Conference. As I said at the beginning, the Council and Somalia can rest assured of the European Union's firm engagement in Somalia.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Serrano for his statement.

I now give the floor to Mr. Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, who wishes to make a further statement.

Mr. Ould Abdallah: Thank you, Sir, for presiding over this meeting and for giving me the opportunity to speak once again. First of all, I appreciate your kind words and those of Council

members addressed to me, my colleagues, my Office and the Secretary-General.

Secondly, I note with great appreciation the Council's renewed and practical interest in the situation in Somalia and in the progress made, which needs to be consolidated. We need to continue to support this Government, whatever difficulties it may have within the country. Without a Government there will be no progress.

Thirdly, I would note in particular positive support for the increased integration of the United Nations system in order to help it to be better informed and more effective in delivering its various forms of assistance. I also note with appreciation the encouragement for the idea that the international community has to move back to Mogadishu to be closer to the victims and to be more effective. We cannot continue to address Somalia by remote control.

Fourthly, the vast support for the Istanbul Conference on Somalia is most encouraging and will strengthen the Government of President Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed and his peace efforts with all Somalis ready to talk stability and to set aside their arms.

Finally, I call on all parties engaged in the process to help the timely and effective disbursement of stipends to members of parliament and to soldiers. Lack of payment is at the root of much of the crisis that the Government is living through. Regular payment or the lack thereof has a critical impact on stability within Somalia.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to Mr. Abdurahman Ibrahim, who wishes to make a further statement.

Mr. Ibrahim (Somalia): Mr. President, allow me to thank you once again for your dedication to this issue, Somalia. I would also like to thank the other members of the Security Council who also mentioned everything that is in their hearts about Somalia. I would also like to offer my heartfelt thanks to those countries whose taxpayers' money as gone to Somalia, in particular, the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Japan and Norway, as well as the European Union.

I am also pleased to mention here, on behalf of my Government, and as stated in paragraph 25 of the report of the Secretary-General (S/2010/234), that about $147.6 million in fulfilled pledges has already been received, thanks to payments from Belgium and the European Union. And, in paragraph 26, we see that $340,000 was paid to the Central Bank of Somalia. Council members can therefore see how much of the money that has been pledged to the Somali people how much has actually reached them. My Government would like to ask the international community what it would like us to show in the fight against terrorists who have a good "father" — they get a lot of money — when we are not getting anything at all. How can we fight against these terrorist who are destroying our people and our country, when Al-Shabaab and other groups are getting their money from their own fathers or their uncles?

I thank Ahmedou Ould Abdallah and my brother the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union. They keep fighting and talking every day, every single minute, about the situation in Somalia. And they are trying their very best to say whatever they can say about Somalia. But, to be frank and honest, nothing of what they say or what other friends of Somalia say has actually been perceived by the Somali people. I am sorry about that.

As to the United Kingdom and the United States, yes, the United Kingdom is the largest donor to Somalia, having pledged $150 million to $180 million. The representative of the United Kingdom earlier mentioned $60 million as having been pledged to Somalia. A lot of money has been spent in the name of Somalia, but none has come to my Government. And I am responsible for the Somali people. If nobody trusts us, whom should trust? The trust and responsibility of the people of Somalia lies in us. We should be trusted and held accountable for whatever is given to us to be distributed to the Somali people. If not, then we are not responsible parties.

I would also like to express my appreciation for the reference to the Monitoring Group in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2010/234). I also thank the Norwegian representative for mentioning it as well. My Government has very seriously taken note of the Group's report (S/2010/91). We have established a commission to further investigate the allegations. The findings will be shared with the members of the sanctions Committee. In spite of the fact that I myself have been falsely accused, I would like to assert to the Security Council that the Commission established by the Prime Minister will continue its investigations. The findings will also be shared with the Council. Everyone

who has been accused will be accountable to the Commission. But if persons have been accused falsely or without basis, we would like the Security Council to take action against those who actually collected false reports.

Many Somalis are now dying because of the report. The aid that is supposed to reach the Somali people is not reaching them. All members of the Council know that. The report has actually created quite a mess in my Government and among my people. Our enemies — Al-Shabaab and other groups — are laughing at us. They are very happy with what is coming from the report of the Security Council's Monitoring Group. The enemies of Somalia are actually being helped by the Group's report. Without thinking thoroughly or understanding what they were writing, the Group's members helped Al-Shabaab and the terrorists. I would like for them to think carefully before they act. As the Somali Government, we are ready to take this issue seriously, to investigate and to take thorough action.

I would like to thank every member of the Council who has spoken from the heart about helping the Somali people. In particular, we will never forget what Ahmedou Ould Abdallah is doing for the Somali people. I was one of the first to come from Asmara to meet with him in Nairobi to say that we would like to join the peace process. Here before the members of the Council, I would also like to thank the armed forces of Uganda and Burundi, whose members are paying with their own blood to ensure that Somalia can once again stand on its own feet. We and our children shall also remember all those who are helping us to achieve that.

The President (*spoke in* Arabic): I thank His Excellency the First Deputy Prime Minister of Somalia for his additional statement.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.6314

Security Council

Sixty-fifth year

Provisional

6314th meeting

Monday, 17 May 2010, 3 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Salam	(Lebanon)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Ebner
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr. Barbalić
	Brazil	Mrs. Viotti
	China	Mr. Li Baodong
	France	Mr. Araud
	Gabon	Mr. Issoze-Ngondet
	Japan	Mr. Okuda
	Mexico	Mr. Puente
	Nigeria	Mr. Amieyeofori
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Turkey	Mr. Apakan
	Uganda	Mr. Rugunda
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Ms. Anderson

Agenda

Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (S/2010/169)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506.

10-36420 (E)

Please recycle

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (S/2010/169)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Serbia, in which he requests that the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Jeremić (Serbia) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the Council, I extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. Vuk Jeremić, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Lamberto Zannier, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Zannier to take a seat at the Council table.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Skender Hyseni.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Hyseni to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2010/169, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Lamberto Zannier, to whom I now give the floor.

Mr. Zannier: The report before the Council today (S/2010/169) details the activities of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) from 16 December 2009 to 15 March 2010. Today, I intend to highlight key issues and update the Council on events that occurred after 15 March.

Overall, since my most recent address to the Council in late January (see S/PV.6264) the situation in Kosovo has remained stable, although the potential remains for volatility and instability, especially in northern Kosovo and a number of significant developments have taken place. The absence of a significant process of reconciliation between the communities continues to be a challenge, and that, coupled with economic difficulties, continues to pose a risk of social unrest.

UNMIK is devoting close attention to issues affecting relations between the communities to facilitate regional cooperation, including through its presence at meetings; to focus on northern Kosovo, including by exercising administrative responsibilities in northern Mitrovica; to engage with all interested parties on issues relating to cultural and religious heritage; and to offer its good offices for the resolution of practical issues between Pristina and Belgrade in the expectation that more direct channels of dialogue for the resolution of such issues can be activated between the parties.

While there has been some encouraging movement in the cultural heritage sphere and in UNMIK's efforts to address practical inter-ethnic issues in Mitrovica, progress in other areas is still heavily conditioned by the prepositioning of the sides in relation to the upcoming International Court of

Justice advisory opinion on the legality of Kosovo's declaration of independence.

In particular, regional cooperation, which is key to badly needed economic development, has suffered notable setbacks due to status-related considerations. However, while there are no standardized procedures for the participation of the Kosovo institutions in regional or other international forums, UNMIK's facilitation has in most cases allowed the seemingly incompatible demands of the two sides to be reconciled, thus providing a concrete contribution to the development of regional cooperation initiatives.

Indeed, particularly at the technical level, we have had considerable success in facilitating Kosovo's participation in regional and international encounters, although the Kosovo authorities appear to believe that UNMIK's facilitation role is not in the interest of their declared sovereign status. As long as it is needed and helpful, UNMIK will continue to play its status-neutral role with all stakeholders in order to foster regional dialogue and cooperation. In this context, I have continued to engage with both Belgrade and Pristina, as well as with regional leaders, holding consultations on the margins of international events, as well as meetings in capitals both within and outside the region.

With UNMIK's facilitation, Belgrade and Pristina continue to have direct dealings on missing persons issues through the Working Group on Missing Persons chaired by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and on religious and cultural heritage issues through the Reconstruction Implementation Commission for Serbian Orthodox Religious Sites in Kosovo, chaired by the Council of Europe. While we have seen encouraging progress in the area of cultural and religious heritage with the welcome appointment of the head of Greece's liaison office in Pristina as a European Union (EU) facilitator, the problem of missing persons remains a major challenge to the process of reconciliation between the communities.

ICRC estimates that, as of 27 April this year, 1,862 individuals were still missing across Kosovo. On 8 April, when the Working Group on Missing Persons met in Pristina with delegations from Pristina and Belgrade, representatives of Kosovo-Albanian and Kosovo-Serb families expressed dissatisfaction with the progress made to date and demanded that the issue be depoliticized. Their call should be heeded. In this light, I warmly welcome the, announcement by Serbia's war crimes prosecutor's office on 10 May of the discovery, in cooperation with the EU Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX), of a mass grave near Raska in Serbia. The site is believed to contain the remains of some 250 Kosovo Albanians. The prompt identification and return of the remains to surviving family members will help the bereaved to achieve closure and start the healing process.

Regrettably, direct practical cooperation between Belgrade and Pristina has not extended to areas other than those I have just mentioned. The efforts of EULEX to re-establish a fully functioning multi-ethnic court in the northern part of Mitrovica have produced mixed results so far. Similarly, progress towards the establishment of full-fledged customs facilities at gates 1 and 31 is also proving difficult.

I mentioned at the outset the particular potential for volatility and instability in northern Kosovo. The situation in northern Mitrovica remains politically delicate, and the experience of past years shows that the reconstruction and returns activities in the inter-ethnic Kroi i Vitakut/Brdjani neighbourhood need to be adequately shepherded. So far, 17 Kosovo Albanian families and 40 Kosovo Serb families have moved into reconstructed and newly constructed homes in the neighbourhood, and UNMIK wishes to see this process continue unhindered. We have made efforts to assist the families in addressing the infrastructure needs of the neighbourhood through UNMIK-facilitated technical working groups, and I am pleased to report that both communities have been constructive and cooperative and that the building season in Kroi i Vitakut/Brdjani has recommenced peacefully this year. The everyday problems facing the communities here, as in so many other locations throughout Kosovo, do not discriminate; they affect all ethnicities and are best addressed through joint efforts.

Intent on opening new channels for direct dialogue between the northern and southern parts of Mitrovica, particularly on the pressing issue of returns — which leaders on both sides have raised with me — I have repeatedly visited Mitrovica over the past few months to meet with the key players. Unfortunately, obstacles to agreeing on the modalities, including who should or should not participate in this dialogue, have so far stymied my efforts to bring the two sides together on the issue, politics once again prevailing. My staff and I will continue our efforts but, ultimately, the effort and good will must come from the

local leaders on both sides, as well as from Pristina and Belgrade.

The issue of returns continues to be a source of tension in other parts of Kosovo as well, with this period having witnessed a serious display of local resistance to returns in the village of Zallq/Žac in north-western Kosovo. The spontaneous return of 23 Kosovo Serbs to the village in late March was met with repeated protests by groups of Kosovo Albanian residents of Zallq/Žac and neighbouring villages, who alleged that the returnees included individuals who had committed war crimes in the area — allegations which have not been substantiated. Five people from Zallq/Žac are still considered missing from the conflict. There have also been allegations that the protests may be motivated by property disputes.

Whatever the case, encouragingly, the Kosovo authorities welcomed the returns and allocated €100,000 to the accommodation of the returnees, and Kosovo police and the Kosovo Force provided protection. Regrettably, however, this did not stop further repeated attacks by stone-throwing youths and, most recently, the firing of bullets into the tent of a returnee family, which fortunately did not result in any injuries.

Ultimately, the situation in Zallq/Žac can be seen as a microcosm of Kosovo's humanitarian and economic challenges: the unresolved missing persons issues, the related lack of reconciliation, the difficult economic circumstances, security and property issues, and the cumulative effect of all these issues on the returns process. The reaction of the Kosovo authorities has been encouraging, but it is clear that more must be done at the grass-roots level to overcome the legacy of the past.

Since the submission of the report before the Council, measures taken by the Kosovo Telecommunications Regulatory Authority to dismantle and destroy transmitters and other equipment of unlicensed telecommunications service providers in Kosovo led to widespread disruption in the communication infrastructure in minority areas, including for emergency services. In response, transmitters operated by licensed service providers in northern Kosovo were attacked with explosives.

The issue is a complex one, with legal, political, commercial, humanitarian, and security implications. While the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority viewed the situation as a rule of law and commercial matter, the humanitarian impact of disconnections so abruptly implemented is unquestionable. The Law on Telecommunications was promulgated by UNMIK in 2003 and is still the only telecommunication sector regulation in Kosovo. In the past, UNMIK has repeatedly reminded unauthorized providers of the licensing requirements foreseen in that Law. Nevertheless, UNMIK remains concerned by the humanitarian impact of the disconnections and is monitoring the steps being taken by the Kosovo authorities to lessen the impact of the disconnections on the minority communities affected.

Since I last addressed the Council, there have been some significant changes at both the local and central governance levels in Kosovo. The newly created Kosovo Serb-majority municipalities have now set up their administrative structures and, while they enjoy a certain degree of attention and goodwill from the Kosovo authorities, it is nonetheless too early to assess their performance with respect to catering to their constituents' needs and aspirations.

At the central level, the major event since the submission of the report before the Council was a cabinet reshuffle announced on 31 March. Six ministers were replaced and a new Ministry of European Integration was established. A reshuffle of deputy ministers, which had been expected in late April, has been delayed. In the meantime, a EULEX investigation into allegations of corruption concerning the Minister of Transport and Telecommunication has strained relations between the Kosovo authorities and elements of the international community in Kosovo.

Relations between UNMIK and the Kosovo authorities are courteous, if at arm's length, and the UNMIK staff continue to maintain a variety of daily, fruitful contacts at the working level with their Kosovo counterparts.

Finally, I wish to highlight the progress we are making in the integrated mission planning process mandated by the Secretary-General. UNMIK and the United Nations Kosovo team are in the process of developing a United Nations strategic framework for Kosovo that will allow us to better share the overarching objective of ensuring lasting security and stability in Kosovo. The United Nation's strongest comparative advantage in Kosovo is its acceptance among all the communities. In this regard, UNMIK and

the United Nations Kosovo team have identified a number of common priorities and challenges that would maximize the impact of the interventions of United Nations bodies in Kosovo, especially with respect to human rights and governance, inclusive municipalities, the situation in the North and the issue of returns. I am pleased with the progress we are making.

In closing, on behalf of all UNMIK staff, I wish to thank the Council for its support and assure it that UNMIK will continue to perform its mandated functions in order to ensure continued peace and stability in Kosovo and in the region. We hope that the two sides will continue to take advantage of UNMIK's facilitation and good offices. With encouragement from this Council and cooperation from all sides, UNMIK is confident that it can continue its work.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Zannier for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Vuk Jeremić, Minister for Foreign Affairs for Serbia.

Mr. Jeremić (Serbia): In 1947, then-President of the General Assembly Oswaldo Aranha of Brazil eloquently defined what he termed the principal mission of the United Nations — to unveil the truth and to face reality in all its complexity, enabling our actions to be properly guided in the maintenance of peace and security of all peoples. As we gather here for another meeting of the Security Council, in accordance with resolution 1244 (1999), we should remind ourselves of his words.

With all due respect to differing points of view, when it comes to Serbia's province of Kosovo and Metohija, a manifest truth is that its status remains bitterly disputed more than two years after its ethnic Albanian authorities attempted secession through a unilateral declaration of independence (UDI).

Pristina's UDI has clearly divided the world and brought into question the fundamental tenets of the contemporary international system. It has neither contributed to Balkan stability nor enhanced regional cooperation. A substantial majority of United Nations Member States and of those seated today on the Security Council have stood firm against efforts to impose the forcible partition of my country. They have continued to respect our sovereignty and territorial integrity. On behalf of my nation, I would like to reiterate our deep gratitude for their support as we seek to resolve Kosovo's future status through patient diplomacy.

Before turning to the Secretary-General's report (S/2010/169), I want to emphasize that the principled position of Serbia's democracy remains set in stone. We will never yield and recognize UDI. We will continue to vigorously defend our position in a non-confrontational manner, using all diplomatic means at the disposal of a peaceful sovereign State.

I would like to extend a warm welcome to Special Representative Lamberto Zannier and thank him for his work. The United Nations remains an indispensable actor in Kosovo. It is therefore critical that the Council keep supporting the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) as a crucial pillar of peace and stability.

We deeply appreciate the constructive approach of the United Nations and organizations that operate under its overall authority, such as the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX). They have set the stage for responsible stakeholders to work together on improving the lives of ordinary people irrespective of their ethnicity. Disagreements on status must not impede our ability to act in concert on resolving practical issues.

As a result of this approach, the unstable equilibrium on the ground has been largely kept in check. This has ensured that the overall situation in Kosovo remains "relatively calm but fragile", to quote the report.

Kosovo's ethnic Albanian authorities have on numerous occasions failed to embrace pragmatic, status-neutral engagement, notably in the rule of law area. For instance, the 2 March visit by the head of EULEX, Yves de Kermabon, to Belgrade resulted in an agreement on how to move forward rapidly on the judiciary issue, in particular as it affects the North Mitrovica courthouse. Despite having been duly apprised of its contents beforehand, Pristina publicly rejected the terms after they were embraced by Belgrade.

The international community's executive authority has yet to be used to put this breakthrough into effect and thereby pave the way for a constructive dialogue on the matter of customs. Instead, these two areas of shared interest — integral parts of the

Secretary-General's report — remain open to the detriment of the Kosovo Serb population in particular.

Regrettably, the Secretary-General's report downplays a number of growing challenges in Kosovo, from organized crime and corruption to police misconduct and judicial dysfunctionality. The European Commission's most recent progress report, on the other hand, paints a more realistic picture. It states that organized crime and corruption continue to be issues of "serious concern" and affirms that the judicial system is "weak, vulnerable to political interference and inefficient".

More recently, EULEX Acting Chief Prosecutor, Johannes van Vreeswijk, stated that Pristina's so-called Minister of Transport and Telecommunication, Fatmir Limaj, together with a tight-knit group of associates, has been under investigation since May 2009 for "money-laundering, organized crime, misappropriations of office, fraud in office and soliciting bribes". The EULEX Acting Chief Prosecutor has also suggested that the so-called Prime Minister of Kosovo, Hashim Thaci, along with other Pristina-based figures, have strongly discouraged him from moving forward in his work.

In another high-profile case, the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) War Veterans Association made threats against EULEX after the recent arrest of former KLA commander Sabit Geci. He was charged with crimes related to organ harvesting committed on ethnic Serb civilians in the well-known "yellow house" in neighbouring Albania.

Several Serbian officials, including Minister Goran Bogdanović and his deputy, were illegitimately expelled by Pristina under armed escort, despite being legal residents of the province. At around the same time, unilateral force was used by a Kosovo special police unit on Serbian mobile and fixed telephony, disrupting the ability of Kosovo Serbs to communicate beyond their enclaves — a serious breach of contemporary humanitarian norms. No warning was given. It was quick and violent, apparently catching many international actors in Kosovo off guard.

Thankfully, the situation on the ground is improving and the technical damage is being repaired. We must make sure this sort of unilateralism does not happen again. In this context, I would like to welcome the statements by UNMIK and EULEX that disassociated them from the controversial strategy for northern Kosovo. This unilateral scheme was sponsored by the so-called International Civilian Office. Its intent was to forcibly implement the delegitimized Ahtisaari proposal, in violation of resolution 1244 (1999).

The precarious state of Serbian patrimony remains a deeply troubling part of the reality on the ground in Kosovo. The report of the Secretary-General highlights a number of disturbing incidents, including church vandalism, graveyard desecration, the looting of icons and other relics, and the denial of property rights. Inexplicably, it continues to remain silent on the lack of progress in reversing the outrageous decision to pave over with concrete the remains of the twice-destroyed Serbian church in the centre of Djakovica. Serbia is today raising for the fifth time in the Council the fact that nothing has been done to reverse that awful act of cultural cleansing.

These illustrative examples are not isolated incidents. They cause, result in and reinforce each other, all at the same time. They are an integral part of the post-UDI reality on the ground that directly affects the return of the 205,835 expelled Kosovo Serbs registered by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Especially in south Kosovo, the police seem unable to prevent acts of intimidation and violence against Serbs exercising their right of return. For instance, the reconstructed village of Žac was repeatedly attacked over several months: homes were vandalized, power lines were cut, car tyres were slashed and children were stoned. As a result, most of its inhabitants decided to leave Kosovo. And just three days ago, one of the returnees who chose to remain was shot at by an unknown assailant while he sat in the tent in which he lives.

Senior UNHCR official Eduardo Arboleda has stated that "the return of displaced persons has literally stopped". This has been echoed by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which has written that local authorities in Kosovo "have done little to encourage displaced persons to return". The well-respected Minority Rights Group International has gone further, saying in a recent report that since UDI the situation for Kosovo Serbs and other non-Albanians has worsened, and that this is forcing them to leave Kosovo "because they face exclusion and many instances of discrimination".

Notwithstanding numerous statements by the province's ethnic Albanian authorities that have claimed the return of internally displaced persons (IDPs) to be a priority, the reality on the ground is that in the past year, only a few hundred Kosovo Serbs have returned to their homes. That amounts to less than one half of one per cent: a staggering figure. It represents a failure of monumental proportions that must urgently be addressed. The Republic of Serbia nevertheless continues to be dedicated to finding a way to overcome these and many other concrete challenges in status-neutral ways consistent with Council resolution 1244 (1999).

In this context, I should like to underline that an understanding was recently reached with UNHCR to establish three specialized offices in central Serbia that will enable IDPs to receive Kosovo Property Agency decisions. We hope this will pave the way for more than 40,000 claims by Serbs to be finalized, leading to the recovery of illegally seized property without further delay, after more than a decade of prevarication.

The Republic of Serbia has continued to work with the international community in a number of other important areas of mutual concern. We greatly appreciate UNMIK's concerted efforts to, in the words of the report, "decrease tensions and focus on common needs" (S/2010/169, para. 12) in north Kosovo. Its irreplaceable role in resolving practical problems is very welcome, as is the offer to chair a number of multi-ethnic task forces composed of representatives of north Kosovo institutions and local ethnic Albanian authorities. We also support the European Union's (EU) enhanced status-neutral presence in north Kosovo and look forward to European Union House beginning to function at full capacity in the near future.

I am pleased to underline that day-to-day cooperation between Serbia and the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) on issues of police, justice and customs has also continued apace. Information is exchanged on a regular basis, and technical discussions in a number of important competency areas have proven to be useful to both sides. Close working relationships have developed, leading to increased understanding of the needs and priorities of everyone concerned.

I would like to salute the international community's indispensable role in protecting Serbian cultural and religious heritage in Kosovo. A positive development that took place during the reporting period was the status-neutral appointment by the European Union of the head of Greece's liaison office in Pristina, Ambassador Dimitris Moschopoulos, to the position of facilitator for the protection of Serbian heritage in the province. We have already begun to work with him in accordance with Council resolution 1244 (1999) and the Secretary-General's six-point plan.

Serbia is encouraged by early signs of accomplishment. For example, Ambassador Moschopoulos has been able to convince the local ethnic Albanian authorities in the municipality of Vucitrn to redress a terrible wrong. For a decade, the Church of Saint John the Baptist in the village of Samodreza had been used as a garbage dump by the nearby elementary school. This shrine is particularly important for the Serbian people, as it was built on the foundations of the church in which the martyrs of 1389 took communion before going into the historic battle of Kosovo.

I would like to express cautious optimism that issues related to the supply of electricity for Serbian communities throughout the province will be resolved in the near future. Thanks to the constructive role played by UNMIK and especially the EU, it appears that a status-neutral solution is being worked out.

I come to the matter of the Kosovo Force (KFOR). Its unique ability to bridge existing communal divides and maintain peace and stability on the ground remains acknowledged by all. The Republic of Serbia will continue to work with our partners to ensure that KFOR's role is not diminished, especially in the context of safeguarding Serbian patrimony. We believe that proposals to hand over operational jurisdiction for guarding a number of these sites to local police units would not contribute to improving the fragile security situation. This is especially important given the opposition to such plans clearly expressed by the affected monastic communities.

Despite recent setbacks on the ground, I believe we are approaching a new, more promising moment on Kosovo. In the time ahead, we should concentrate our efforts on coming together to find a solution through dialogue. In October 2008, the General Assembly tasked the International Court of Justice with determining whether the UDI conforms to international

law. Late last year, a crucial stage in the judicial process — oral hearings — came to an end, with a record number of countries presenting their views, including all five permanent members of the Council. That has made it the largest case in the history of the Court.

The Court is close to completing its deliberations and we all have an obligation to take that fact very seriously. The judges' work should be allowed to run its course unhindered by political pressures, such as further recognition of the UDI. It is deeply regrettable that in recent months a couple of States have chosen to do this anyway, reportedly under foreign pressure, which amounts to disregard for the principal judicial organ of the United Nations.

Once the International Court of Justice reports back to the General Assembly, an unprecedented opportunity will be created to build momentum for achieving the ultimate goal: a strategic compromise between Serbs and Albanians. There is no doubt that the roots of the many problems we face in Kosovo are buried deep in history. Those problems are made even more difficult by the consequences of unilateral action.

Yet I strongly believe that we have the ability to look beyond the divisions of the past and create a new environment that will make future solutions possible. We must summon the will and courage to do what this moment in history demands. This can only be achieved through peaceful dialogue which results in a mutually acceptable outcome that provides for lasting stability in the region and the wider world.

A solution through dialogue — and not unilateralism — is our goal. We ask for the support of all United Nations Member States in solving this problem once and for all. This year can be the year of our shared success. I want to assure this Council that Serbia stands ready to flexibly engage in all sincerity, for our intent is neither to freeze the conflict nor to triumph or subjugate.

The issue of Kosovo cannot be solved by forcing conditions of submission on a party that would be compelled by circumstances to accept, for that would be done in humiliation, under duress and at an intolerable cost to democracy. It would inevitably leave a deep stain of resentment, a bitter memory upon which the terms of a one-sided outcome would rest — not even permanently, but only as upon quicksand.

On the other hand, a solution that leaves no one defeated can unite the world and contribute to advancing regional priorities within the framework set forth by international law. Only such a solution, built with the free consent of all responsible stakeholders, can last. Only such a solution can erase the divide among United Nations Member States caused by the UDI. Only such a solution merits the support of the world — not UDI.

Serbia will pursue a compromise with Pristina constructively and in good faith, as if they had never opted for UDI. But make no mistake: we are equally prepared to resist UDI unremittingly, as if no compromise were on the horizon.

I trust that the limits of the achievable can be extended because of the commitment by all to the same cause — and that cause is European integration. Dialogue between Serbs and Albanians that produces a fair and balanced agreement will provide a critical boost to securing a peaceful European future for the whole of the Western Balkans. Membership in the EU is Serbia's central strategic priority. We strongly believe in the shared destiny of all European nations. And we remain dedicated to embracing Robert Schuman's dream of an organized and living Europe indispensable to the maintenance of peaceful relations among States.

These ideas stand at the foundation of our democracy and our genuine desire for reconciliation. They remind us of the importance of cooperation, compromise and consensus-building, while prompting us to move beyond all of our differences and disagreements to achieve common prosperity. Even though there have been many hardships along the way, and even though much sorrow has resulted, we believe the moment has come to put aside the fear. And we believe that together we can transform the plot of land that is Kosovo and Metohija — dear to both peoples — from one of contention to one of harmony.

Let us therefore gather our strength and start preparing for the end of this historic journey. "All endeavour calls for the ability to tramp the last mile, shape the last plan, endure the last hours' toil", Henry David Thoreau said, adding that this is the virtue we must possess if we are to face the future as finishers. This is the task at hand: to create momentum and then sustain it until we achieve peace and security for all through peaceful dialogue.

Waiting around for an indeterminate period in the vague hope that one side will eventually give in is a recipe for freezing Kosovo's limbo, and that is most certainly not what any responsible stakeholder wants. The only way forward is to bring about a just compromise that balances the desires and interests of our two peoples. That is the goal of Serbia, and we will pursue it until it is achieved, for no stopping point short of agreement will ever be justified.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Jeremić for his statement.

I now give the floor to Mr. Skender Hyseni.

Mr. Hyseni: It is with deep appreciation that I take this opportunity to speak before the Security Council and inform it about the steady progress my country, the Republic of Kosovo, has continued to make in all areas during the reporting period. Celebration of the second anniversary of my country's independence precisely three months ago was another solemn and appropriate occasion to look back and take stock of achievements, progress, key events and developments in Kosovo during these two years of independence.

The recognition of Kosovo as an independent and sovereign State has continued. Since the last Security Council deliberations on Kosovo (see S/PV.6264), three more countries — the Kingdom of Swaziland, the Republic of Vanuatu and the Republic of Djibouti — have recognized the independence of my country. I wish to extend our profound thanks and appreciation to the peoples and the Governments of those countries for supporting the legitimate right of the people of Kosovo to freedom and independence.

That makes 68 nations around the world that have extended formal recognition to the youngest State in the world. But on top of that, Kosovo is blessed to have equally supportive countries among those that are still non-recognizing countries, such as those that have supported Kosovo's membership in the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. And I am very happy to inform the Council that many other countries around the world have announced early recognition or have said that the procedure of formal recognition is under way.

Internally, since the last Security Council debate, Kosovo has seen a number of positive developments, as well as challenges. The overall security situation has remained calm and stable. Discussions and efforts to make Kosovo's European perspective and integration more tangible have marked the reporting period. As we are firmly committed to vigorously pursuing the goal of European Union (EU) and NATO membership, the Government of the Republic of Kosovo has engaged in a comprehensive process with institutions of the EU in order to give new dynamism to Kosovo's European perspective. Based on our Constitution, we have recently established a Ministry for European Integration, an institution that will coordinate the work of all line ministries related to specific requirements deriving from the European integration process. The establishment of the Ministry and the swift appointment of the Minister show the profound importance the Republic of Kosovo attaches to its European perspective.

Kosovo equally supports the European perspective of all the other countries of the Western Balkans. In line with that, we consider that cooperation and mutual assistance among the countries in the region are crucial to a speedy integration in the European Union of all seven countries of the Western Balkans.

The Republic of Kosovo has already started to implement a wide range of ambitious reforms to meet the required European benchmarks. Of course, we understand that this is going to be a very demanding journey. We are of the view that, just like other countries in our region, Kosovo should also soon be invited to open a visa liberalization dialogue with the European Commission.

Trade and the economy is another important sector in which we seek a more specific European perspective. A trade agreement between the Republic of Kosovo and the EU is an objective of ours. We are making every effort to reach that goal. On 16 April, the Government of the Republic of Kosovo handed over the completed questionnaire on trade relations with the European Union. We hope that this and other preparatory work at all levels will enable the Commission to start negotiations soon.

The Government of the Republic of Kosovo has stepped up its efforts to address and resolve many issues of the utmost importance for our economy: justice and security, as well as the fight against crime, corruption and cross-border criminal activity. The Government of the Republic has established a special

task force to tackle the issues of corruption and organized crime. The European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo provides indispensable assistance in the police and justice sectors. We are working closely together.

Let me emphasize here how crucial bilateral and regional cooperation is in fighting organized crime. An example of close cooperation to fight illicit cross-border activity was the recent visit to Skopje of the Kosovo Interior Minister to meet with his Macedonian counterpart. On that occasion, they reconfirmed the commitment of both countries to cooperate in fighting organized crime and cross-border criminal activity. The Government of Kosovo has strongly condemned the incident that occurred recently in Macedonia in the vicinity of the Kosovo border.

On the economic front, the Government of the Republic of Kosovo recently signed a contract with the Bechtel-Enka consortium on a major project to build the Morine-Merdar highway. The construction of the four-lane motorway, connecting Kosovo with Albania in the west and with Serbia in the east, has already started. The highway will provide Kosovo — and indeed the entire region — with a highly profitable corridor, which will be very beneficial to all countries in the Western Balkans and beyond.

Moreover, the restructuring of socially owned and public companies and enterprises has also continued, through either privatization or concession, as is the case with the concession to operate the Pristina International Airport. Another crucial major project under way is the new Kosovo coal-based power plant, which is part of the governmental energy strategy.

The institutions of the Republic of Kosovo have continued to work on improving conditions in the minority community areas, especially in Serb-majority areas. To confront the new challenges, overwhelming support has been provided to the newly established municipalities and to the recently elected leadership of those municipalities. Over the reporting period, both President Sejdiu and Prime Minister Thaci have continued to reach out to the Serb community through frequent visits to Serb-majority municipalities. The authorities of the Republic of Kosovo have reached out to Zallq returnees as well, condemning strongly the incidents involved.

Furthermore, decentralization based on the Ahtisaari plan remains a political priority for the entire country. The Kosovo Central Election Commission has scheduled municipal elections to take place on 20 June for the newly established Serb-majority municipality of Partesh.

It is with reluctance, though, that I must yet again say that, through its disruptive and profoundly destabilizing interference, the Republic of Serbia has continued to be very unhelpful. Encouragement and support for illegal structures in the north has continued. The announced so-called elections to be organized by the Republic of Serbia in the north of Kosovo are another example of irresponsible and unacceptable interference. Acts such as those are aimed at undermining efforts to enforce law and order as contained in the comprehensive strategy for the north. To the extremely misleading reactions and comments to the Kosovo Government/European joint strategy for the north, I say that all that the strategy seeks to achieve is proper and normal living conditions for all Kosovo's citizens throughout our country's territory. Normalcy through the restoration of law and order throughout my country is much wanted by all Kosovars regardless of their ethnic or religious background. We are there to provide that for them.

Bilateral cooperation with neighbours, as well as regional cooperation, continues to be in the focus of the Republic of Kosovo as a high priority. The Republic of Kosovo has very good relations with its immediate neighbours — Albania, Macedonia and Montenegro — and has been cooperating closely on a wide range of issues of mutual concern. We invite the Republic of Serbia to join in the efforts of other nations of the Western Balkans to establish an environment of cooperation and understanding in the region, including the normalization of relations with the Republic of Kosovo. My Government stands ready to engage in talks with Serbia on a long list of issues of mutual interest, as two independent and sovereign States. Dialogue would help to ease tension and normalize relations between our countries.

The recent discovery in Serbia of a mass grave containing the bodies of hundreds of Kosovo Albanians has triggered a new wave of profound sadness, with thousands of Kosovar families affected by still unresolved questions concerning missing persons from the Kosovo war. It is disgraceful that, even 11 years after the war, the whereabouts of another 1,862 people are still unknown. We call upon all stakeholders to do

their utmost to finally resolve the issue of missing persons.

In conclusion, let me emphasize Kosovo's strong commitment to becoming a contributing member of the international community. The Republic of Kosovo looks forward to working with all the members of the Council as we promote the shared goal of international peace and security. Once again, I wish to thank the Council for the opportunity to present the views of the Republic of Kosovo.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Hyseni for his statement.

I shall now give the floor to members of the Security Council.

Mr. Ebner (Austria): I would like to welcome Mr. Vuk Jeremić, Foreign Minister of Serbia, and Mr. Skender Hyseni, Foreign Minister of Kosovo, and thank them for their statements. Let me further thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Lamberto Zannier, for submitting the report before us (S/2010/169) and for the important contribution of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) to peace and stability in Kosovo. Austria fully supports the continued efforts of UNMIK to facilitate dialogue between all parties in an evolving environment.

The period from December to March and up to today has seen progress, including the recent successful elections. At the same time, challenges continue to persist in the areas of economic development, good governance, the rule of law and the fight against corruption and organized crime, and with regard to the situation in northern Kosovo. In order to ensure sustainability and preserve the gains achieved thus far, we hope to see a continued focus by the international community in these areas and to receive information on progress made. The common strategic framework developed by UNMIK and the United Nations Development Programme will also serve this purpose.

Unfortunately, there are still no signs of communication, let alone cooperation, between the Kosovo and Serbian sides. We strongly believe that, despite the fundamental disagreement regarding the most basic legal and territorial questions, a pragmatic approach is possible, feasible and necessary for the sake of the people of Kosovo, irrespective of their ethnic background. In this sense, we hope that both sides will intensify their efforts to find pragmatic solutions to unresolved issues affecting the lives of the people living in Kosovo on a daily basis. We hope that pragmatism will also apply with regard to arrangements for the participation of Kosovo in regional and international forums, in consultation with the respective organizations.

We share the assessment that the situation in the North continues to be difficult. We believe that we need a gradual reintegration of the North into the rest of Kosovo, which will happen only through dialogue and the acceptance of both the local communities and Belgrade. We welcome the European Union's (EU) accelerated efforts to enhance its visibility and presence in the North, particularly through the establishment of the EU House in northern Mitrovica.

We welcome the recent conduct of security checks of freight going through gates 1 and 31 and the joint patrolling of the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) with Kosovo police, as well as the intention of EULEX to continue to increase its presence and activities in order to address more efficiently the rule of law challenges in northern Kosovo, including the restoration of full customs controls. We fully support the efforts of EULEX to reintegrate Kosovo Serb and Kosovo Albanian judges and prosecutors into the Mitrovica court and the in-depth discussions on this matter with the authorities in Belgrade and Pristina. We believe that the reintegration of local judges should be among the highest priorities of the international community for the North. It will offer the possibility of justice in an area where it has long been denied.

We are encouraged by the relatively calm security situation and the decrease in tensions between communities. In this context, Austria supports the steps taken by NATO to restructure the Kosovo Force (KFOR) and successively reduce troop numbers in Kosovo, which will also enhance local responsibility. Austria, which is currently the biggest non-NATO contributor to KFOR, is determined to keep up this strong commitment to the operation. Moreover, Austria will continue to provide up to 30 experts for EULEX.

Austria would also like to highlight the valuable contributions made by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) mission in Kosovo in supporting the development of democratic

institutions, in particular its continued assistance to the Central Election Commission and in the monitoring, protection and promotion of human rights, including community rights. As pointed out in the Secretary-General's report and according to a recent OSCE assessment, the implementation of return strategies is still facing a number of challenges and would require enhanced political commitment to lead to sustainable results.

Let me finally reiterate the importance of working towards a common future for all countries of the Western Balkans in the European Union. This message was again reconfirmed at a high-level expert seminar hosted by Austrian Foreign Minister Michael Spindelegger with the participation of Greek Alternate Foreign Minister Dimitris Droutsas and Director-General Michael Leigh of the European Commission in Vienna on 12 May. Experts from the Western Balkans and the EU addressed the current political, economic and social challenges in the Western Balkans in view of EU integration. These discussions and some of the proposals made should stimulate the debate on the future enlargement the EU in view of the Sarajevo conference to be held on 2 June.

Mr. Rugunda (Uganda): I wish to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), Mr. Lamberto Zannier, for his report. I welcome His Excellency Mr. Jeremić, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia, to this debate and thank him for his statement. I also thank Mr. Hyseni for his statement.

From the outset, Uganda would like to commend UNMIK for its continued efforts in promoting security and stability in Kosovo and the region. We are encouraged that the overall security situation in Kosovo during the reporting period remained relatively calm. We commend UNMIK for its proactive engagement with all communities, as well as the authorities in Pristina and Belgrade and international actors in furthering peace and stability in Kosovo. We are convinced that the work of UNMIK in supporting minority communities, encouraging reconciliation and facilitating dialogue and regional cooperation is critical.

We welcome the readiness of the authorities in northern Kosovo to cooperate with UNMIK in order to resolve the practical problems on the ground. It is important that progress be made on the discussions of practical issues despite the political differences. To this end, we commend UNMIK for engaging both sides and setting up task forces in order to promote the depoliticization of the problems and adherence to established rules and procedures.

We encourage all leaders on both sides to commit themselves to dialogue and to avoid any provocation. Every effort needs to be made to promote peaceful coexistence. The persistence of security-related incidents perpetuates insecurity among the minority communities. It is important that the perpetrators of violence be brought to justice so as to foster a sense of security among the minority communities. In this regard, we call on all parties to exercise restraint, mutual respect and tolerance in order to live in harmony.

We therefore welcome the message of peace delivered by the President of Serbia during his visit to the Dečani monastery to celebrate Orthodox Christmas, urging all people regardless of their identity to reconcile their differences for the sake of a common future. These are the kind of messages that are needed from leaders to promote peace and dialogue.

My delegation welcomes the cooperation between UNMIK and the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) on exchanges of information and coordinating on issues of mutual concern. This cooperation is vital, and we encourage its strengthening within the framework of resolution 1244 (1999).

The Kosovo Force (KFOR) plays an important complementary role in maintaining an overall safe environment. In this regard, we salute the efforts of UNMIK, in coordination with EULEX and KFOR, to encourage both sides to find a sustainable and peaceful solution.

We commend UNMIK for facilitating the activities of UNESCO and for facilitating agreement on power supply issues. These activities are important because they build confidence and create better understanding among communities. We therefore encourage UNMIK to continue, in coordination and cooperation with local and relevant international actors, its efforts to address critical social service needs.

Regional cooperation plays an important role in enhancing development. We therefore encourage the authorities in Pristina and Belgrade to work together in pursuance of that goal. We are convinced that UNMIK continues to play an important role in facilitating Kosovo's engagement in international and regional forums. We call on the international community to continue to support UNMIK's important work, consistent with resolution 1244 (1999).

Finally, we commend the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Lamberto Zannier, and the staff of UNMIK, for their good work.

Mrs. Viotti (Brazil): I welcome His Excellency Mr. Vuk Jeremić, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia, and we thank him for his statement. I also thank Mr. Lamberto Zannier, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Kosovo, for his briefing and Mr. Skender Hyseni for his remarks.

As Brazil has stated on previous occasions, resolution 1244 (1999) was intended to provide a legal framework for a negotiated solution to the dispute on the status of Kosovo. Also, it expressly recognizes the need to respect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The resolution remains in force and therefore continues to be the key parameter guiding the United Nations presence in Kosovo and international efforts to resolve the dispute. In that regard, we look forward to the outcome of the proceedings in The Hague on this matter. The search for a negotiated settlement on the final status of Kosovo should remain our ultimate goal.

We are satisfied that the security situation on the ground remains largely calm. The United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) continues to play an important role in promoting engagement between Belgrade and Pristina as well as with relevant stakeholders.

It is also positive that the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo remains active in its efforts to support stability in that country. We note with satisfaction the appointment by the European Union of a facilitator for the protection of the religious and cultural heritage of the Serbian Orthodox Church.

The risk of increased ethnic tensions in northern Kosovo, however, has not disappeared. Reported attacks against Serbian returnees in some localities, for example, are quite disturbing, and must not be tolerated. Regardless of the position one takes on the status of Kosovo, now or in the future, all concerned must ensure that it is a place where ethnic tolerance and multiculturalism allow for peaceful coexistence among communities. We urge the Kosovo Force and the Kosovo Police Service to redouble their vigilance to prevent new incidents of violence.

Continued disputes related to the provision of services to the population are also worrisome. We fully endorse the call by the Secretary-General for all sides to demonstrate openness and flexibility in this regard. Pragmatism is what serves people better at this juncture. Depoliticizing problems will help find solutions, or at least some modus vivendi that addresses the practical needs of regular citizens. The UNMIK-facilitated working groups on issues of interest for local communities in northern Kosovo show that such cooperation is possible.

Full cooperation with UNMIK is also needed. It is regrettable that Pristina did not consult with the Mission in preparing and announcing its "strategy for northern Kosovo". Kosovar authorities must always bear in mind that the Security Council has given the Mission the authority to administer Kosovo in its entirety.

In the Western Balkans, as much as anywhere else, there is no substitute for dialogue and negotiation when differences arise and have to be surmounted in the interest of the people. We hope that sustained engagement and full cooperation with UNMIK, by all stakeholders, will pave the way for a transparent and inclusive approach to address issues still unsettled. We also hope that the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice will help all parties achieve a just solution.

Brazil will continue to support the work of the Special Representative in implementing the mandate of UNMIK, within the framework of resolution 1244 (1999).

Mr. Okuda (Japan): I thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Lamberto Zannier, for his comprehensive briefing. I would also like to extend a warm welcome to Foreign Minister Jeremić of Serbia and Foreign Minister Hyseni of Kosovo.

Japan highly values the contributions made by the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX), the Kosovo Force and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe on the ground to support a multi-ethnic, democratic Kosovo and Western Balkan region. We also appreciate the leadership of Mr. Zannier in mediating the communication between Pristina and Belgrade and between Pristina and the northern provinces. Regarding the current situation concerning the governing institutions in northern Kosovo, we believe it is essential to avoid complications by maintaining a dialogue with the Serb community. In this context, we highly value Mr. Zannier's visit to northern Kosovo and his dialogues with both Kosovo Albanian and Kosovo Serb leaders to address practical problems.

Establishing the rule of law across different ethnicities is among the highest priorities in Kosovo, in particular, in order to address such issues as organized crime and corruption. In this area as well, the dialogue between Pristina and Belgrade is essential. We commend the role that both UNMIK and EULEX are playing in this regard.

We also take note of the slight increase in returns of internally displaced persons (IDPs). At the same time, we are concerned about sporadic incidents targeting minorities, which continue to present physical and psychological obstacles to sustainable returns. We urge further efforts and cooperation by all relevant parties to promote the return of minorities. Japan will continue to support the engagement of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in IDP returns.

In enhancing stability and prosperity in the Western Balkan region, advancing the European perspective through regional cooperation is key. I share the concerns of the Secretary-General, raised in his report (S/2010/169) and urge all parties to show further flexibility, so that their common interests can be addressed, together with Kosovo's participation in international frameworks.

Japan, as a proponent of human security, has supported the efforts of international aid agencies, such as the United Nations Development Programme, towards peaceful inter-ethnic coexistence and sustainable development. A human-centred approach is particularly relevant in the northern provinces, with due consideration given to reducing the level of vulnerability among the population. We also have held a number of bilateral consultations with Kosovo on nation-building. We are encouraged by Kosovo's progress in building its institutional capacities.

Japan remains committed to helping Kosovo to develop as a vibrant, multi-ethnic and fully democratic country, and to cooperating with Serbia and other countries in the region to enhance the stability and prosperity of the entire Western Balkan region, including Kosovo.

Mr. Li Baodong (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation, thanks you, Mr. President, for having convened today's meeting. We welcome the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) (S/2010/169), and we thank Mr. Lamberto Zannier, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Kosovo, for his briefing. We listened very closely to the statements by Mr. Vuk Jeremić, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, and by Mr. Hyseni.

Although there are still many destabilizing factors in Kosovo, it has been possible recently to avert a deterioration of the situation, which remains relatively stable. We welcome that. We trust that, through its ongoing mediation, UNMIK will continue to encourage all parties to enter into dialogue and to promote reconciliation and peaceful coexistence among the various communities in the region. In the future, UNMIK must be particularly vigilant regarding the impact of the strategy for northern Kosovo on the local population once it is implemented, and it must be able to react promptly.

The situation in Kosovo is both complex and sensitive. It affects peace and stability throughout the Balkans, and indeed throughout Europe. China respects the territorial integrity of Serbia and recommends that Kosovo's problems be resolved in accordance with the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter and on the basis of Security Council resolutions. We still believe that a negotiated solution acceptable to both stakeholders is the best way to resolve the problems besetting Kosovo, which should also be the objective of all concerned parties.

We note that UNMIK has carried out its reconfiguration and reduction. In our view, UNMIK's adjustment is not linked to the issue of Kosovo's status

and should not affect the neutral position of the United Nations. UNMIK must continue to implement its mandate pursuant to resolution 1244 (1999) and the relevant documents. We trust that UNMIK will continue to strengthen communication with Serbia and Kosovo and to play its part by providing coordination and good offices in seeking an appropriate solution to Kosovo's problems, facilitating the return of minority communities, protecting cultural and religious heritage, and maintaining security and stability throughout the Balkans.

We call on all parties concerned to support UNMIK's efforts. We trust that the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo will continue to play its role, under United Nations auspices, in the context of neutrality pursuant to resolution 1244 (1999). We trust that it will cooperate with UNMIK and thus play an appropriate role in maintaining peace and stability in the region.

Mr. Araud (France) (*spoke in French*): Allow me to thank Mr. Vuk Jeremić, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia, Mr. Skender Hyseni, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kosovo, for their presence and their statements. I commend the work of Mr. Lamberto Zannier, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and that of all the members of his Mission.

More than two years since its declaration of independence, Kosovo continues to make progress, stabilize its institutions and demonstrate its resolve to meet European standards. An increasing number of States are joining those that have already recognized Kosovo's independence. Such recognitions, 68 to date, of which 22 are members of the European Union, help the young State to strengthen and take its place on the international scene.

Kosovo's status has already been the subject of endless negotiations under various auspices. Such negotiations, which have explored all possible avenues, have made clear the impossibility of reaching a mutually acceptable compromise. In that context, independence, which is the expression of the will of the great majority of the Kosovar people, was the only solution. That is an undeniable and irrevocable fact.

As the Secretary-General notes in his report (S/2010/169), the security situation on the ground has improved, with a decrease in incidents during the reporting period. We welcome that, but any incident — be it a case of common crime or inter-communal violence and regardless of whether it targets Albanians or Serbs — is unacceptable. The Kosovo authorities, supported by the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo, must therefore prosecute the perpetrators of such crimes and step up efforts in that area.

Regional cooperation is also growing owing to calmer dialogue between political leaders and civil society throughout the Western Balkans. In that regard, we call on Serbian and Kosovo leaders to take advantage of opportunities to participate jointly in regional meetings.

While the future presence of Serbia and Kosovo in the European Union is, in our view, assured, it is equally clear that it cannot come about until both countries have taken the paths to dialogue and calmer neighbourliness and have learned the lessons of a reality that transcends vain and dangerous rhetoric. As our Foreign Minister and the European Minister for Foreign Affairs have pointed out, that is not a condition, but a political necessity.

Kosovo must focus on its basic priorities and to continue to make progress on the rule of law and good governance. We also call on the Kosovo Government to do its utmost for those belonging to national minorities. Such twofold efforts will enable Kosovo to advance on the path towards membership of the European Union.

France will continue to give the situation in Kosovo the highest priority and to promote, to the best of its ability, dialogue between Serbia and Kosovo and their mutual European rapprochement.

Mr. Barbalić (Bosnia and Herzegovina): On behalf of the delegation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, I would like to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report (S/2010/169) on the United Nations Interim Administration in Kosovo (UNMIK). I would also like to thank Mr. Lamberto Zannier, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Kosovo, for introducing the report. We welcome the participation of His Excellency Mr. Vuk Jeremić, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, and Mr. Skender Hyseni in today's meeting.

We note with appreciation that the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, operating within the framework of resolution 1244 (1999), is successfully continuing the implementation of its

strategic goal — the promotion of security, stability and respect for human rights in Kosovo. We particularly welcome and commend UNMIK's efforts to encourage the process of reconciliation and to facilitate constructive dialogue and regional cooperation, as well as its focus on mediation between the communities and its support to minority communities.

In that context, we are of the view that efforts to encourage inter-community dialogue and confidence-building among the parties are of particular importance in the area of returns. Although the number of voluntary minority returns remains low, we are encouraged by the fact that there has been an increase in comparison to 2008. Furthermore, in stressing the importance of providing conditions conducive to sustainable return, we welcome UNMIK's efforts to establish task forces, with the main objective of decreasing tension and drawing attention to common needs.

Furthermore, during the reporting period, UNMIK continued to facilitate the activities of the Reconstruction Implementation Commission, led by the Council of Europe, on the reconstruction of cultural and religious heritage sites. We also welcome the European Union's announcement of the appointment of the head of the Greek Liaison Office in Pristina as facilitator in that area, and we urge the key stakeholders to engage constructively in consultations led by the facilitator.

Bosnia and Herzegovina believes that strengthening the rule of law in Kosovo is of great importance. Hence, we welcome the activities of UNMIK and the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX), operating within the status-neutral framework of the United Nations, in that regard. We also support the existing practice of cooperation and coordination among UNMIK, EULEX, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and NATO — the latter present through the troops of the Kosovo Force (KFOR) — and we hope that this practice will continue. Furthermore, we note that, during the reporting period, the transition of KFOR to a deterrent presence was implemented in gradual and phased manner, as stated in the Secretary-General's report.

In conclusion, Bosnia and Herzegovina would like to reiterate that stability and security in Kosovo are important to achieving lasting peace and prosperity in our region. We believe that the international community should continue to play an important role in supporting the aspirations of the countries of the region to their integration into European and Euro-Atlantic structures. At the same time, we believe that the countries of the region should continue to cooperate with the international community in order to reach these goals. Finally, we would like to reiterate that fostering good relations and cooperation with its neighbours is of the utmost importance to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mr. Issoze-Ngondet (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, Gabon welcomes the presence among us of His Excellency Mr. Vuk Jeremić, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia. We assure him of our willingness to further strengthen the felicitous links of friendship and cooperation between our two countries, and of our readiness to work towards a peaceful settlement of the dispute under consideration.

My delegation also thanks M. Lamberto Zannier, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for the clarity and quality of his briefing on the Secretary-General's report (S/2010/169) on the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). We congratulate him and express our appreciation for his commitment to peace and stability in Kosovo.

The current report, which follows that (S/2010/5) which formed the basis of our debate of 22 January (see S/PV. 6264), offers an assessment of the activities undertaken since then by UNMIK and the evolution of the situation on the ground. It addresses, inter alia, the political and security situation, the return of displaced persons and refugees, the consolidation of the rule of law, human rights and the protection of cultural and religious heritage.

My delegation reaffirms its support for the central role played by UNMIK in encouraging and facilitating dialogue and reconciliation among the various communities of Kosovo, and with Pristina and Belgrade. We also appreciate the tremendous work done on the ground by the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Kosovo Force in coordinating their operational and strategic activities.

Gabon has always advocated dialogue and cooperation in the peaceful settlement of crises and

conflicts. We continue to believe that these two tools are absolutely necessary to achieving peace and stability in Kosovo and throughout the region. In this regard, we urge the two parties to resume discussions on matters of disagreement in order to settle their dispute, taking into account the security of the entire region.

As we outlined in the debate of 22 January, we support maintaining UNMIK's presence in Kosovo until the final settlement of the dispute. We take this opportunity to reaffirm our attachment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Serbia. Moreover, it should be recalled that resolution 1244 (1999) remains the legal basis for any peace initiative with respect to this matter. The plan laid out by the Secretary-General is therefore an important contribution to the search for a peaceful and negotiated solution to the Kosovo issue.

Gabon, like many other countries, continues to believe that the final recognition of Kosovo's status by the international community must be based on the rules for processes leading to self-determination. In this regard, my country awaits the decision of the International Court of Justice pursuant to the request of the General Assembly in its resolution 63/3.

Mr. Puente (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Like other speakers, I welcome Mr. Vuk Jeremić, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, and thank him for his statement. I also thank Mr. Lamberto Zannier, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Kosovo, for introducing the Secretary-General's report (S/2010/169), and Mr. Skender Hyseni for his briefing.

My country notes the adjustment of the mandate of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) to circumstances on the ground. We welcome the fact that UNMIK's coordination with the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) has been undertaken in accordance with resolution 1244 (1999). That resolution is the legal basis for achieving a solution to the situation in Kosovo and contributing to stability in the Balkans.

The report of the Secretary-General indicates that the security situation in Kosovo is calm but fragile. It warns of a potential exacerbation of tensions in the northern part of the territory. UNMIK will therefore have to continue to ensure five key areas on the ground: security, stability, human rights, mediation among communities, and humanitarian assistance and development. Its mandate must also continue to enjoy the support of the parties, the Security Council and the international community.

The United Nations provides a forum for promoting a peaceful solution to the situation in Kosovo that is acceptable to the parties. It must, however, work in cooperation with such regional organizations as the European Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. In the past, Mexico has indicated that the United Nations must strengthen its strategic relations with regional organizations pursuant to Chapter VIII of its Charter in order to cooperate in the prevention and timely mitigation of regional conflicts and the consolidation of human rights and the rule of law. That is why we again encourage the strengthening of cooperation among UNMIK, EULEX and other regional organizations in order to support minority communities, resolve inter-community conflicts, promote reconciliation, dialogue and regional coordination, and encourage development in Kosovo.

With respect to security, we note that since the most recent debate of the Security Council (see S/PV.6264) on this topic, the situation in Kosovo has not improved, particularly in the North. Although the report notes a decline in the number of incidents, Mexico is concerned that the situation remains a factor for instability and an obstacle to the return of refugees from minority communities. We reaffirm our support for UNMIK's work to promote confidence-building measures, assist communities seeking reconciliation, facilitate dialogue on problems of common interest, and support development.

With regard to the specific situation in northern Kosovo, my delegation considers it necessary that, in the elaboration and implementation of programmes for the integration of minorities, the parties should give priority to the protection of human rights and maintain open dialogue and cooperation with UNMIK. All such measures would contribute to transparency and to the inclusion of parties interested in ensuring the effectiveness of such programmes to the benefit of the population and the prevention of violence.

Regarding the situation of displaced persons, although some Kosovo municipalities have implemented return strategies for 2010, the conditions necessary to the safe conduct of such returns — including security, access to public services, the right

to housing and property, and socio-economic and development opportunities — have yet to be established. One positive contribution of UNMIK in this regard has been its support for the establishment of community working groups to help create such conditions. It is appropriate to recall, however, that consistent with resolution 1244 (1999) — and in particular with international humanitarian, human rights and refugee law — the parties are obliged to create an environment conducive to the safe voluntary return without discrimination of all those who so desire. We again encourage UNMIK to enhance its coordination with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, local institutions and other humanitarian agencies in the field to that end.

With respect to the rule of law and human rights, my delegation commends the cooperation between UNMIK and EULEX in promoting the strengthening of judicial and human rights institutions in Kosovo and to ensure that the civilian population, including minority communities, has full access to justice and that victims receive due attention.

We acknowledge the importance of promoting the rule of law to fight impunity, ensure accountability, reconcile divergent interests, encourage the reconciliation process among communities, and provide compensation for damages caused by human rights violations. We therefore encourage UNMIK to continue providing mediation and support to the Serbian authorities and the International Committee of the Red Cross in carrying out forensic investigations and investigations into disappeared persons. We also recognize the essential role played by UNMIK, together with EULEX, in the protection of the cultural and religious heritage of Kosovo, and welcome the appointment of a European Union facilitator.

With regard to the unilateral declaration of independence of Kosovo, I wish to reaffirm my country's position that this matter is seized by the International Court of Justice. Until the Court rules, the principle of respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, which all Member States are bound to uphold under the United Nations Charter, remains fully in force. Mexico has been a staunch and unwavering promoter of the principles of justice and international law enshrined in the United Nations Charter and the work of the International Court of Justice. In this respect, we eagerly await the Court's decision.

Sir Mark Lyall Grant (United Kingdom): I would like to join other Security Council colleagues in welcoming the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Lamberto Zannier; the Foreign Minister of Serbia, Mr. Vuk Jeremić; and the Foreign Minister of Kosovo, Mr. Skender Hyseni, to the Council Chamber today and to thank them for their statements. I would like to commend, in particular, the important work of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) in promoting stability and reconciliation in Kosovo and to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Zannier, for his continued leadership and hard work.

The United Kingdom's support for Kosovo's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity is unwavering. Since the Secretary-General's most recent report (S/2010/169), we are pleased that four more United Nations Member States have recognized Kosovo, bringing the total to 68. I would also like to recognize Kosovo's second anniversary of independence, which took place this February.

We are pleased to note that progress has continued in Kosovo over recent months. Following local elections, the Kosovo Government established four of the six new Kosovo Serb majority municipalities envisaged in former United Nations Special Envoy Ahtisaari's Comprehensive Proposal for the Kosovo Status Settlement (S/2007/168/Add.1). The remaining two municipalities are due to be established later this year after municipal and mayoral elections in Partesh/Parteš on 20 June and North Mitrovica in the autumn. This demonstrates a real commitment by the Kosovo Government to improve the everyday lives of minority communities. We encourage the residents of Partesh/Parteš and North Mitrovica to take part in these elections and to embrace the advantages that decentralization will offer local communities. This includes greater access to public services, more control over the resources provided to them by the Pristina Government, and a stronger voice to make their legitimate concerns heard by Kosovo's decision-making institutions and the international organizations assisting their development.

We note the Secretary-General's finding that there has been no increase in the number of ethnically-motivated violent incidents in Kosovo. Given that the last reporting period saw a decrease in the number of security incidents, we are pleased to see that this positive trend has continued. Moreover, it helps create

the right atmosphere for the transition of the Kosovo Force to a deterrent presence.

It is important, however, that Kosovo take further steps to improve its standards in governance and rule of law. This is essential if Kosovo is to match the progress towards European integration made by its neighbours. The United Kingdom supports efforts to help Kosovars of all communities to rebuild and return to their pre-conflict homes.

The ability of all communities in Kosovo to live in safety and dignity is of paramount importance. The recent incidence in Zallq/Žac was serious and should be condemned. There is no place in Kosovo for violence. All sides have committed themselves to this, and we look to Pristina to honour this commitment and to others to take a measured response to the incident.

We strongly encourage deeper cooperation between Belgrade and Pristina on practical issues and echo the Secretary-General's call for flexibility and pragmatism in finding solutions. This can only be to the benefit of all communities in Kosovo. It is also important for all parties to continue addressing the wrongs of the past in order to promote reconciliation and to improve regional relations. In that vein, the United Kingdom commends recent cooperation on missing persons, which has led to the discovery of a mass grave in Serbia. We also welcome the Serbian Parliament's recent resolution condemning the Srebrenica massacre. These are both positive steps.

The United Kingdom strongly supports Serbia's goal of European Union membership. We encourage Serbia to devote its full resources to making progress along this path. Continued disagreement over status issues will only serve as a distraction from achieving this important strategic objective.

The United Kingdom supports the valuable work that the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) is doing in Kosovo. It is important that Belgrade and Pristina continue to cooperate closely with EULEX so that the rule of law, higher standards of governance and justice can be delivered to all of Kosovo's communities. Steps to enable the full functioning of the court in Mitrovica would be a clear demonstration of that cooperation.

UNMIK also continues to do useful work in Kosovo, particularly in support of minority communities. It is important, however, to keep UNMIK's size and resources under close review to ensure that they are commensurate with the scale of its responsibilities.

Kosovo has established its position as a viable, independent State with European Union support for its European perspective. The United Kingdom remains committed to working with Kosovo, Serbia and the wider international community in promoting stability, reconciliation, regional cooperation and economic progress so that Kosovo can advance towards a European Union perspective in parallel with its neighbours.

Ms. Anderson (United States of America): Let me start by welcoming Kosovo Foreign Minister Hyseni and Serbian Foreign Minister Jeremić to the Council today. Let me also thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Zannier for his excellent and comprehensive briefing. The United States deeply appreciates the work he and his team are doing to support peace and security.

The second anniversary of Kosovo's independence was 17 February, an occasion to mark Kosovo's development as an open, multi-ethnic and democratic republic. Sixty-eight countries have now recognized Kosovo, and the United States congratulates Kosovo and its citizens on the progress they have made to strengthen their democracy and governing institutions and to contribute to stability in the Balkans during these two years.

With this in mind, I would like to focus on five points. First, we welcome the progress made by the Government of Kosovo in enhancing its institutional capacity as it pursues democratic development, regional stability and Euro-Atlantic integration. Kosovo authorities are building on the strong foundation of last fall's municipal elections in implementing the decentralization process laid out in the Ahtisaari plan, which will improve governance and empower all communities. With help from the central Government, newly elected mayors and Serb majority municipalities are putting good governance structures in place and reaching out to the population to address local needs. Deputy Secretary of State Steinberg met with these Serb mayors in April. He found them to be enthusiastic about decentralization and the resources it affords them. We commend these forward-thinking leaders of Kosovo's Serb community for their

constructive and courageous engagement on behalf of their communities.

This effort is still a work in progress, but we believe that success here will encourage engagement by Kosovo Serbs in the North, who also demand and deserve responsive local Government that serves their communities' real interests.

The upcoming June elections in Partesh/Parteš will provide another opportunity for citizens to make their voices heard and effect real change. In contrast, the parallel elections again planned for Mitrovica later this month are not the path to a thriving community. They only detract from good faith efforts to promote stability and reconciliation in Kosovo and the region.

Secondly, improving governance and the rule of law in northern Kosovo is essential. We welcome the Government of Kosovo's efforts to refine and implement a strategy — which was endorsed by the Kosovo Assembly with the support of representatives of all Kosovo's communities — to extend the benefits of good, accountable, legitimate Government to citizens in the North.

We also welcome the European Union's (EU) plans, with the help of the robust presence of the EU Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo in the North, to step up efforts there. We call on Belgrade and Pristina to find opportunities for pragmatic cooperation that can improve life for communities in Kosovo's North, including on cross-border, crime, customs and other rule of law and judicial issues.

Thirdly, we commend the efforts of Kosovo and Serbia to resolve issues affecting displaced persons, including setting the conditions for safe return to their homes in Kosovo. We welcome the recent decision to reopen the Kosovo Property Agency offices in Serbia under the auspices of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. We now look to the stakeholders to expedite the Agency's work and remove impediments to resolving remaining cases. As the Secretary-General's report (s/2010/169) notes, there were nearly five times the number of returns in January and February this year than in the same period in 2009. We call on both Kosovo and Serbia to support conditions to extend this constructive trend to facilitate sustainable returns.

Fourthly, let me commend the statements made recently to promote reconciliation by the leaders of both Serbia and Kosovo, including President Tadić's remarks on Orthodox Christmas and President Sejdiu's remarks on Orthodox Easter. It is an encouraging sign that Easter services were held in the Sveti Sava Church in South Mitrovica for the first time since 2004. I should note that the United States is pleased to support the reconstruction efforts at Sveti Sava and at other sites, working with the Reconstruction Implementation Commission, in which the Government of Kosovo actively participates. We hope that the Commission's work can now move forward more rapidly with the cooperation and participation of all affected parties. To this end, we support the EU's newly appointed facilitator, Ambassador Moschopoulos.

Finally, we agree with the Secretary-General's conclusion that the overall situation has remained relatively calm but fragile. We condemn recent incidents of inter-ethnic violence, although, as the report notes, there has been no overall increase in the number of incidents, including those affecting minority communities. The 20 April attack against 26 Kosovo Serb returnee families in the Istog/Istok municipality was unacceptable. We commend Prime Minister Thaci's swift response, including the commitment to providing financial and technical assistance to the victims and 24-hour Kosovo Police patrols for the returnees. The Kosovo Police's smooth assumption from the Kosovo Force in March of responsibility for protecting the Gazimestan monument offered another example of the Government stepping up to its responsibilities.

We also condemn the recent incidents of violence against licensed telephone system operators, apparently in retaliation against Kosovo Government regulatory efforts. Violence is an unacceptable response that undercuts the rule of law and legitimate efforts to ensure that entities licensed by Kosovo can provide public services in Kosovo.

Kosovo's independence is irreversible. Partition is not acceptable. Kosovo's status and borders are settled. The development of effective democratic institutions and efforts to maximize the participation of all citizens is an ongoing process. The United States stands with Kosovo, Serbia and all of the Balkan countries as they advance along the path of building stable, secure democracies that are fully integrated into European and Euro-Atlantic institutions.

Mr. Amieyeofori (Nigeria): We welcome the presence of His Excellency Mr. Vuk Jeremić, Foreign Minister of Serbia, and his insightful statement. We thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Lamberto Zannier, for his comprehensive briefing in the context of the Secretary-General's report (S/2010/169) pursuant to resolution 1244 (1999). We also thank Mr. Skender Hyseni for his remarks.

We commend the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) for its role in helping to maintain peace and stability in the region. Its efforts to facilitate dialogue among all of the parties concerned, activities in the rule of law area and coordination among the various actors enjoy our strong support. We are encouraged by the collaboration between UNMIK and the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo in fostering cooperation and peace in the region, within the status-neutral framework of the United Nations. We welcome the intervention of the European Union in setting up a mechanism to facilitate the preservation of the religious and cultural heritage of the Balkan region. It is an initiative, given the traditional respect for these institutions and values, that will further promote mutual tolerance, harmony and coexistence among the people.

Despite these positive developments, we note that some challenges exist. We share the concern noted in the Secretary-General's report about the possibility of increased tension in northern Kosovo should the implementation of the strategy for northern Kosovo by the authorities in Pristina take place without dialogue with local communities and all relevant stakeholders. It is important that sensitive issues related to northern Kosovo be addressed through peaceful means and close consultation and coordination between all relevant actors, taking into account the specific circumstances and concerns of all communities. Reported incidents of attack against minority communities only serve to raise the perception of insecurity in Kosovo. They also constrain efforts to promote returns of displaced persons, reconciliation and the longer-term stability and development of Kosovo and the region. My country stresses the need to ensure that perpetrators of crimes are brought to justice, such incidents roundly condemned, and efforts made to reach out to victims.

On the issue of minority returns, we welcome the increased number of returnees recorded during the reporting period. We are concerned, however, that overall numbers of returns remain low and that, in the assessment of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the implementation of returns strategies in 2010 may be hampered by lack of funding for returns activities, lack of political commitment and structural problems in local governance, as well as concerns over the viability of conditions for returns. We call for concerted efforts by all stakeholders, in particular UNMIK and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, to ensure that returns are voluntary and safe.

Nigeria reiterates its full support for dialogue and a negotiated settlement of the dispute. In concluding, we commend the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and his team for their unrelenting efforts in promoting peace and stability in Kosovo and in the region.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are grateful to Mr. Lamberto Zannier, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), for introducing the report of the Secretary-General on UNMIK (S/2010/169) and for his efforts in the complex situation in the district. We welcome the participation in today's Council meeting of Mr. Vuk Jeremić, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, and we share his assessments.

We also listened attentively to Mr. Hyseni's statement, which, once again, was not distinguished by its objectivity or compliance with resolution 1244 (1999).

Our position of not accepting Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence (UDI) is well known. Russia supports the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of Serbia. We are convinced of the need for strict compliance with resolution 1244 (1999), which remains fully in force. It remains binding for all as an international and legal basis for a settlement in Kosovo and for ensuring security in the district. Not understanding or accepting that means not accepting international legality.

The Russian Federation fully supports the work of UNMIK in Kosovo in discharging its mandate. The Mission must continue to play a leading role vis-à-vis the other international presences in the district, as set forth in the November 2008 report of the Secretary-General (S/2008/692). Nobody is entitled to hinder the

use of its vested authority, including in helping to ensure the rights and security of national minorities and in achieving the international community's democratic standards for Kosovo. This applies equally to the Mission's duty with respect to the external representation of Pristina in regional and international mechanisms. We note the irreplaceable role of the Mission in promoting intercommunal dialogue, especially in the northern part of the district. In this context, we welcome its efforts to establish special working groups to attract all interested parties with a view to solving practical problems encountered by the local population.

We see no particular improvement in the relations between the Mission and Pristina in spite of continuing protocol contacts between the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the Kosovo authorities. The Kosovars are still ignoring the United Nations Mission in spite of the principles for a settlement set forth in resolution 1244 (1999).

The situation in Kosovo causes us serious concern, first and foremost the attempt of the Pristina authorities to implement, come what may, the "strategy for northern Kosovo". We are convinced that any unilateral steps in this area could ignite the already complex inter-ethnic situation in the district, especially against the backdrop of the growing dissatisfaction in the socio-economic situation and the high level of crime and corruption.

In addition, we are just as concerned by the Kosovars' attempts to instigate steps by the international presences, especially the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX), to dismantle the repeater stations of Serbian mobile communications operators as well by Pristina's intention to adopt legislation establishing a system by which Serbian citizens could enter Kosovo only on foreign passports. It is vital that there be a legal and political assessment of these actions by the Kosovo authorities. Otherwise, they could lead to a sharp increase in intercommunal tension.

We still find the situation of returns to Kosovo by internally displaced persons to be unsatisfactory. Unfortunately, there still are numerous instances of Kosovo Serbs being forced to sell their property and leave the district, a situation to which no attention has been paid. All of that demonstrates no trend in Kosovo towards increasing inter-ethnic tolerance. Quite the contrary: the situation has regressed. The territories of large Serbian enclaves are gradually shrinking, and the small ones are simply dying off.

The situation with respect to protecting Serbian religious and cultural heritage is alarming. Of course, we have a positive view of the appointment of Ambassador Moschopoulos of Greece as European Union facilitator on these issues. However, we note that the desecration of Serbian graveyards and cathedrals in Kosovo continues. In this context, we are especially concerned about NATO's transfer to the Kosovo police of responsibility for guarding important Serbian cultural sites, a transfer which has begun, and about the general trend towards reducing the numerical strength of the Kosovo Force.

We would especially like to emphasize that EULEX's catering to Pristina authorities, and at times its inactivity, has harmed the authority of that mission, which has been practically exceeding the neutral status set out in its mandate. In these conditions, EULEX must scrupulously comply with the principles of resolution 1244 (1999) and act in a balanced fashion, bearing in mind the interests of both parties, and within the framework of the general coordinating functions of UNMIK.

The complex situation in Kosovo proves the need for the Security Council to retain a leading role on Kosovo. The Council must remain the guarantor of compliance with international law, the Charter of the United Nations and its own decisions. Russia confirms its readiness to continue political efforts to help develop a legally correct and fair resolution of the question of Kosovo under resolution 1244 (1999).

Mr. Apakan (Turkey): Allow me to extend a warm welcome to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, Mr. Vuk Jeremić, and to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kosovo, Mr. Skender Hyseni. It is a pleasure to see them with us today, and I thank them both for their comprehensive presentations.

I would also like to welcome Mr. Lamberto Zannier and to thank him for his briefing and for introducing the report of the Secretary-General (S/2010/169). I would like also to thank Mr. Zannier for his leadership and to commend the work of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). We are pleased to see that UNMIK continues to discharge its mandate with an eye to evolving circumstances. The common strategic

framework that is being developed by UNMIK and the United Nations team in Kosovo to allow the United Nations family there to focus on the implementation of development programmes is a welcome step.

We also welcome the close cooperation between UNMIK and the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX), and the expansion of the role and functions of the latter. We remain committed to continuing our contribution to both EULEX and KFOR in accordance with needs and requirements on the ground.

In the two years since Kosovo became independent, the number of countries that have recognized Kosovo has constantly grown. Turkey considers this to be an irreversible process that will ultimately contribute to lasting peace, stability and prosperity in the region. On the other hand, as a young State, Kosovo faces some important challenges. To surmount those challenges and to provide a better life for all of its citizens, Kosovo must concentrate on its priorities and continue to make improvements in areas such as the economy, the rule of law, good governance and human rights.

That said, as Minister Hyseni's statement demonstrates, Kosovo has already made progress in solidifying its democracy. Elections which are widely recognized as fair and credible have been held. Concrete achievements have taken place with regard to decentralization, which is a key element in creating a multi-ethnic society. Important steps have been taken and legislation adopted towards the protection of human rights and the integration of minorities. We are also glad to see that there is a new momentum in the returns process.

We are equally pleased to see that the security situation remains stable. We share the concern related to northern Kosovo and welcome the steps taken by the Kosovo authorities towards reconciliation and the integration of all of the communities there. Such efforts will take time and require important resources, but we believe that they will contribute to gathering all of Kosovo's citizens around a common vision. In that respect, we were very much encouraged by the words of President Sejdiu, who, on the occasion of Orthodox Christmas, confirmed the commitment of the Kosovo institutions to work for a brighter, prosperous and peaceful future in which all citizens of Kosovo would feel totally free and equal in their common home, Kosovo. Like President Sejdiu, we believe that it is important that people of all ethnicities in all parts of the country should come to feel that Kosovo is their home and that Kosovo's future is their future.

It is with this understanding that we expect Kosovo Serbs to take part in the political process and administrative structures of the country. We also urge all stakeholders to refrain from actions that will cause unnecessary burdens in their lives.

It is encouraging that Kosovo is taking steps to build friendly relations with its neighbours and strengthen regional cooperation. It is our sincere hope that relations between Belgrade and Pristina will also ultimately serve to contribute to lasting regional peace, stability and prosperity. While there are disagreements over the status issue, it should not be a reason for both parties not to cooperate pragmatically and make progress towards reconciliation and the resolution of some outstanding problems in areas such as cultural heritage, energy, infrastructure, customs and organized crime.

We agree with the Secretary-General's observation that, by putting aside status considerations, Belgrade and Pristina should show flexibility to enable Kosovo's representation in regional and international mechanisms and forums that are essential to the economic and democratic development and long-term stability of the region. We call on both sides to find pragmatic solutions towards that end.

As an important player in the region, Serbia can contribute more to the consolidation of peace, democracy and prosperity in the Balkans. We also welcome and support developing relations between Serbia and the European Union. The international community should continue to support Serbia in its efforts to integrate with European structures. As for Turkey, we are pleased to enjoy close and cooperative relations with Serbia, which we are determined to take even further to the benefit of both our countries and of the entire region.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Lebanon.

I would first like to thank Mr. Lamberto Zannier, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), for his comprehensive

briefing. I would also like to welcome Mr. Vuk Jeremić, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, and to thank him for his statement. My thanks also go to Mr. Skender Hyseni for his statement.

With regard to the security situation, the Secretary-General has referred in his report (S/2010/169) to incidents, including those affecting minorities, not having increased in comparison with the previous reporting period. Apart from that, the security situation has remained relatively stable. We call upon all parties to cooperate to bring about justice and support victims, by ensuring accountability for criminals. Such efforts will have a positive impact on stability and security and serve to reassure various groups. It is important also to improve institutional mechanisms for the protection of human rights.

With regard to the situation in northern Kosovo, we believe that sustained efforts must be made vis-à-vis local communities. Any effort to ensure inclusion for northern Kosovo must include open, flexible dialogue and ongoing consultation with all stakeholders. We call upon all stakeholders in northern Kosovo to play a constructive role by encouraging local communities to meet and enter into dialogue with a view to finding practical solutions to sensitive issues.

With regard to the missions working in Kosovo, we commend UNMIK for its work to strengthen security and stability, ensure respect for human rights and foster reconciliation through cooperation among the various groups. We urge the Kosovo authorities to continue dialogue and cooperation with UNMIK in a constructive and practical manner. We welcome the coordination among UNMIK, the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo and the Kosovo Force in the context of neutrality set out in resolution 1244 (1999).

With regard to cooperation on humanitarian, cultural and development issues, we welcome the fact that in 2010 there has been an increase in volunteer minority returns compared with 2008, according to statistics from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. We commend efforts by the UNMIK and the European Commission Liaison Office to permanently resolve the problem of camps for minorities. The number of those repatriated remains very low. We need to ensure security and development conditions that are conducive to returns.

The various parties to cooperate have committed themselves to protecting the religious and cultural heritage of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Kosovo, which is an encouraging step forward in protection of that heritage. We commend the constructive work done by the head of Greece's liaison office in Pristina as facilitator of those efforts.

We call upon all parties to find practical solutions to matters of common interest by moving away from politicization with respect to the status of Kosovo. There must be cooperation among all parties to improve daily life of the people of Kosovo, irrespective of their affiliations. We encourage Belgrade and Pristina to adopt a constructive approach to ensure the participation of representatives of Kosovo's institutions in international and regional forums. We also call on them to pursue constructive and direct dialogue aimed at reducing tensions. Lebanon encourages peaceful solutions to these problems, which can strengthen regional security and stability throughout the Western Balkans.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia has asked to make a further statement, and I give him the floor.

Mr. Jeremić (Serbia): I am going to be very brief. I just want to reflect on a few thoughts that I heard this afternoon.

I cannot agree with some of the speakers' assessments that Serbia is exercising irresponsible interference in other countries' regional affairs. When it comes to Serbia's regional outlook and the way that it deals with the region, I think that the Government has demonstrated clearly that reconciliation and peace are at the forefront of how we see the future of the Balkans: a future in the European Union.

I am glad that a few speakers today noted that the Serbian parliament has passed the resolution on Srebrenica. But I would like to underline that that is the first decision of a parliament in the history of Europe to extend an apology for something that took place in history. As we all know, the history of Europe is full of occurrences that would necessitate an apology of one sort or another. But Serbia was the first in history to extend an apology.

My Government is very proud of what we are doing in order to make sure that there is peace and

stability throughout the region — in Bosnia, in Croatia, in the disputed parts of Serbia and elsewhere.

Serbia places no preconditions on the reopening of a dialogue. We do not attach — as I heard that Pristina does — conditions that someone is to be treated in this way or that way. We are ready to talk about everything. We are ready to talk about all the outstanding issues, including the one that is at the very heart of all outstanding issues, that is, the future status of the province.

I believe that borders anywhere in the world can be settled only upon agreement by all interested parties, and not by announcements of any unilateral action, no matter how mighty the supporters of such unilateral action may be. That goes for the borders of Serbia and the borders of any other country of the world. Serbia stands ready to engage in a dialogue that would settle all the outstanding issues once and for all in a peaceful manner, and Serbia asks for the support of this Council and of the United Nations in this peaceful approach.

This is the first time in the history of the Balkans that an issue of this sort is not being resolved by conflict. Nobody is trying to go to war with anybody, and I think this is a great, positive development, because we are talking about 600 or 700 years of Balkan history. This is the first time that somebody is trying to do to settle such issues peacefully, including the issue of the border. That is what we propose. We stand ready to engage, in the best possible faith, to resolve it.

I want to draw attention to one thing. Somebody said that, during this reporting period, five times more internally displaced persons returned than in the previous period. In the previous period, there were 50 people, and this time 259, but that is out of 200,000. Yes, the math is correct, but if we look at the absolute numbers, I think they represent our common failure, and we need to address it in the best possible faith. As we have engaged on all outstanding regional issues in the best possible faith and in full sincerity, the Government of Serbia stands ready to engage with all interested parties in resolving this issue once and for all. But it is only through dialogue — peaceful dialogue — that we believe we can solve it. That is all I wanted to say.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I give the floor to Mr. Hyseni.

Mr. Hyseni: Very briefly and, in a way, quite reluctantly, I will continue to take a few more minutes of the Council's time in reaction to a few quite misleading allegations.

Very generally, on the rule of law and the commitment of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo to fighting organized crime and corruption, no one should doubt that determination. The very fact that one can see tangible action on that front shows how determined the Government of the Republic of Kosovo is. We are working closely on that with all international presences, especially the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX).

The game of figures — 200,000 or 250,000 displaced persons — continues. We have informed the Council of the real figures many times. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees reports of 1999 included not only Serb internally displaced persons or refugees, but all of them. But, really, it is not about numbers; again, it is about the determination of the Government of Kosovo to seeing progress in the repatriation of all of its citizens, especially the numerous Serb citizens still outside the borders of our country.

We have protected the cultural heritage and religious heritage of all ethnic communities in Kosovo for centuries, and we are going to continue to do so. Nothing can stand in the way of our protecting cultural heritage, and we will continue to take over those duties from the highly respected Kosovo Force units that have been giving us a hand in this very important task.

I need to inform the Council that we long tolerated illegal mobile telephone service providers in a part of our country for the sole reason of not disturbing some members of our country. Those illegal telephone service providers have been removed in an effort to restore law and order in that part of our country.

At the same time, we have undertaken very tangible and successful efforts to make sure that all members of the Serb community in that part of Kosovo will swiftly have access to means of communication. The public telecom company has offered thousands and thousands of SIM cards and telephones free of charge to the members of the Serb community.

Unfortunately, there was an illegal, violent attack on legal telephone providers in that part of our country.

and that is unacceptable. Indeed, the perpetrators removed the antennas of the IPKO and Vala companies — which are legal, licensed telephone service providers — instead trying to use the services that those companies offered. We have invited the Republic of Serbia to enter into roaming agreements with very serious telephone companies in Kosovo, and we are open to that.

I wish to say just a little more on regional cooperation and dialogue. I need to re-emphasize very strongly yet again that Kosovo is ready to sit and talk with the authorities in Belgrade on many issues of mutual concern. Kosovo and Serbia will continue to be where they are as close neighbours, and they need to work together for a future common good and a future European perspective — not only a common Kosovo-Serbia European perspective, but also a regional European perspective.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): There are no further speakers on my list. The Council has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.6315

Security Council

Sixty-fifth year

Provisional

6315th meeting

Tuesday, 18 May 2010, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Salam	(Lebanon)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Ebner
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr. Vukašinović
	Brazil	Mrs. Viotti
	China	Mr. Long Zhou
	France	Mr. De Rivière
	Gabon	Mr. Moungara Moussotsi
	Japan	Mr. Okuda
	Mexico	Mr. Heller
	Nigeria	Mrs. Ogwu
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	Turkey	Mr. Apakan
	Uganda	Mr. Rugunda
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Ms. Anderson

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506.

10-36643 (E)

Please recycle

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Robert Serry, Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Serry to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Robert Serry, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Serry: At the outset, let me congratulate you, Sir, on Lebanon's presidency of the Security Council.

Since the Council last met on this item, Israeli-Palestinian proximity talks, mediated by the United States, have officially commenced. The Secretary-General has been actively supporting the resumption of proximity talks, and the Quartet welcomed that development on 11 May.

We commend President Abbas's continued commitment to the two-State solution and his readiness to participate in talks. We welcome the support provided by the Arab League ministers' meeting in Cairo on 1 May and from the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) on 8 May. We also commend Prime Minister Netanyahu's adherence to the policy he laid out last year committing his Government to a negotiated two-State solution. The leaders have displayed political courage in entering those negotiations. That courage will now be tested anew at the negotiating table, initially in proximity format, with a view to transitioning to direct talks as soon as possible.

Both parties have made specific commitments and received certain assurances, which have enabled proximity talks to begin. Some of these remain confidential. These commitments must be respected, as must obligations under the Road Map and international law. We welcome United States President Obama's reaffirmation that both parties would be held accountable for actions that undermine trust during the talks.

United States Envoy George Mitchell is currently in the region for a second round of proximity talks, following the first round in early May. We commend the United States on its readiness to play an active role in the process. Quartet members remain in close touch regarding the ongoing talks. While the issues are complex and sensitive, the goal of the effort under way is clear, as stated by the Quartet on 19 March in Moscow: the resolution of all core issues, an end to the 1967 occupation, and two States living side by side in peace and security.

With the start of the proximity talks, it is vital that positive actions be taken on the ground to build confidence in both Gaza and the West Bank, including in East Jerusalem. I turn first to Gaza, where the Secretary-General has repeatedly called for a different and more positive strategy. The United Nations is seeking to be a catalyst for such an approach on the ground, within the framework of Security Council resolution 1860 (2009).

We continue to condemn acts of indiscriminate or excessive violence and to urge calm. Militants fired 12 indiscriminate rockets towards Israel, causing no injuries. The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) conducted 19 incursions and eight air strikes during the reporting period, injuring nine Palestinians and killing three. Seven Palestinians were killed and 13 injured in tunnel incidents under the border with Egypt.

We continue to urge Palestinian unity on the basis of PLO principles. Despite recent efforts by independent Palestinian figures promoting reconciliation, Hamas continues to refuse the unity proposal that was mediated by Egypt and accepted by other Palestinian factions.

We call for access to, and the release of, Israeli Corporal Gilad Shalit, who has been held in captivity for 47 months without third-party access. The resolution of this issue, and with it the release of a significant number of Palestinian prisoners, would be

in the overwhelming interest of both Israel and the people of Gaza.

Above all, we stress the scale of the unmet needs of Gaza's civilian population after nearly three years of closure and the heavy damage of Operation Cast Lead, and we urge an end to the Israeli closure of the Strip. While the Israeli Government continues its existing policy, I welcome initial steps that have been taken to ease the impact of Israel's closure.

The package agreed between the Government of Israel and the Secretary-General in March is being implemented. The Tel el-Sultan water treatment project will be completed by the end of this month. Construction material began entering Gaza yesterday to begin the completion of 151 housing units at Khan Younis within 16 weeks. I received confirmation this morning that the essential wastewater treatment facility and pipeline at Khan Younis is now also fully approved.

Two thousand four hundred and sixty-nine truckloads entered Gaza between 11 April and 8 May. That represents a modest increase over the previous period, and there was a wider variety of items allowed in. The entry of wood, aluminium and, in particular, glass into Gaza on the private market has enabled a range of minor repairs. However, import levels are still only about one quarter of pre-June 2007 levels.

This can only be a beginning. Much more is needed. The United Nations, in close cooperation with the Palestinian Authority, is seeking larger and more strategic interventions to address needs in Gaza. These efforts enjoy strong support from Quartet and regional partners. We are in active dialogue with the Israeli authorities in pursuit of that objective. Defence Minister Barak confirmed to me last week that Israel will further engage the United Nations on the way ahead. I believe we must move forward with urgency on several fronts.

First, major water and sanitation interventions cannot wait. The aquifer underlying Gaza is collapsing and is expected to be completely unusable within two years. The salinity of water available is reducing agricultural productivity, while raw sewage continues to flow at alarming levels into the sea — as bad for Gaza's neighbours as it is unacceptable for Gaza itself. The United Nations has already presented a full programme of the work required in this sector. In partnership with the independent water authority in Gaza, supported by the Palestinian Authority, we will seek discussion with Israel on its implementation.

Secondly, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) needs to build 100 schools in Gaza, starting with at least 15 straight away. The student population in UNRWA schools will have increased by 15,000 above the classroom capacity since the imposition of the closure in June 2007. Without new schools, UNRWA cannot meet a rapidly expanding demand for quality education for the next generation of Gazans.

Thirdly, there are key construction needs in the health sector, along with needs for additional equipment. The Gaza power plant also requires a major servicing and the routine supply of spare parts to ensure continuous operation and a corresponding reduction in electricity cuts across the Strip. The first step in this regard will be to ensure that all material required for this servicing enters Gaza in the days ahead.

Fourthly, a significant increase in both the quantity and range of commercial traffic through legitimate crossings is required to restore market conditions. At present, the flourishing illegitimate tunnel trade permits smugglers and militants to control commerce. By contrast, international agencies and local contractors who wish to procure goods entering through legitimate crossings too often stand idle due to the Israeli closure. Yet, as we have seen with the recent imports of glass, restoring functioning market conditions is the way to meet needs, lower prices, combat smuggling and empower legitimate business activity.

I wish to note that Egypt opened Rafah crossing on 13 May for six days to enable the movement of persons on humanitarian grounds. I also note that Egypt continues its important efforts to combat weapons smuggling, including by installing metal sheeting along its border with Gaza. This only redoubles the importance of goods being able to enter Gaza through the legitimate crossing points.

Within the Gaza Strip, we condemn the extrajudicial execution by Hamas of two Palestinian prisoners on 15 April and a further three executions carried out today without presidential authority. We call on Hamas not to carry out any further executions. Hamas demolished approximately 20 homes two days ago in Rafah, which it alleges were built illegally.

We are closely following developments on the ground in East Jerusalem. No demolition orders against Palestinian homes were implemented during the reporting period, despite official statements threatening further demolitions. No new settlements have been approved or tendered in East Jerusalem. Israel has also publicly stated that there will be no construction in the Ramat Shlomo settlement for two years. However, the Government continues to state its intention to build settlements in Jerusalem, and there is ongoing settlement activity. Construction in existing Palestinian neighbourhoods in East Jerusalem — such as the start of work on 14 settler housing units within the Ras el-Amud neighbourhood — is particularly provocative. Marches by right-wing Israelis into East Jerusalem have also caused tensions, as have settler provocations and clashes in Sheikh Jarrah and Silwan. Palestinian institutions in East Jerusalem remain closed. I urge Israel to implement its Road Map obligations and respect international law in East Jerusalem. I stress the utmost importance of all parties showing restraint and responsibility in words and actions regarding Jerusalem.

In the remainder of the West Bank, no new tenders were issued or approvals given for construction of settler units during the reporting period, reflecting Israel's settlement restraint policy. Construction is ongoing due to approvals given prior to the restraint, or due to violations of the restraint policy by settlers. The Israeli Government is taking certain steps to address violations. The restraint is a step beyond previous Israeli positions and has not come without domestic challenges. We strongly urge that it be extended beyond September and expanded to cover all settlement activity, including in East Jerusalem, and that action be taken in accordance with the Road Map to dismantle outposts erected since March 2001.

Both parties have responsibilities to act to maintain a secure environment, and security cooperation between Israel and the Palestinian Authority continues to be an important enabler of improvements in the West Bank. However, there are also worrying trends, in particular a rise in settler violence. Two mosques were vandalized, one in an arson attack by unidentified assailants on 4 May in a village between Nablus and Ramallah. The Israeli authorities condemned these incidents and ordered investigations, but no one has yet been held accountable. Following stone-throwing at Israeli vehicles on 13 May, a 15-year-old Palestinian boy was shot and killed by unknown assailants believed to be Israelis — an incident that must be fully investigated. I strongly urge Israel to do more to combat violence by settler extremists.

By contrast, Israeli forces conducted a significantly increased number of incursions from the previous period, arresting 286 Palestinians and injuring 96 others. A militant was killed in an IDF operation on 26 April. Weekly demonstrations against the barrier continued, with Israeli security forces using live rounds, rubber-coated bullets and tear gas to disperse demonstrators. Following recent amendments to a 1969 Israeli military order that originally authorized the deportation of infiltrators from countries hostile to Israel, there are continuing concerns regarding the number of Palestinians who may be affected by the broad and unspecific terms of the order. The United Nations is closely monitoring its impact and continuing to seek clarifications.

The Palestinian Authority should also continue and intensify its ongoing security efforts, in accordance with the Road Map. On 25 April, Palestinian security forces seized hundreds of kilograms of explosives, ammunition and weapons from a number of Hamas arms caches in Nablus, and arrested some 35 individuals. President Abbas has also recommitted to combating any incidents of incitement.

Looking ahead, and building on earlier steps, reduced Israeli incursions and the further removal of obstacles to movement — which currently stand at 505 — would be very positive. It is equally important that certain security and development steps by the Palestinian Authority are now permitted in Area C. The United Nations also awaits an Israeli response to a $5-million plan to address some of the most basic humanitarian needs in education, shelter and water and sanitation in Area C.

Let me also draw the Council's attention to certain funding concerns. Despite the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee's call on donors, only $380 million have so far been provided to the Palestinian Authority out of the $1.24 billion required for 2010. I urge increased support for the Palestinian Authority budget. Private sector growth is critical to sustainable economic growth, and in this regard I note that the second Palestine Investment Conference will take place on 2 and 3 June to facilitate and mobilize investment in Palestinian businesses, including in the tourism sector.

UNRWA also faces a financial crisis that threatens the sustainability of essential operations throughout the region, from employing teachers and providing medical care to improving precarious camp conditions for Palestine refugees. Even after scaling back requirements to critical levels, UNRWA's deficit today amounts to $90 million. I urge all those in a position to assist, in particular countries in the region, to provide additional support to UNRWA this year.

While the situation pertaining to Lebanon has remained largely stable on the ground, allegations of arms transfers to Hizbullah created tension between Israel and Lebanon during the reporting period. Israeli officials have reiterated their concern over alleged transfers of sophisticated weaponry through the Syrian border. Lebanese officials, including President Sleiman and Prime Minister Hariri, Hizbullah leaders, and Syrian officials sharply denied these allegations. A number of Arab and European leaders actively engaged with all relevant parties to dispel the tension.

Within Lebanon, leaders met to continue their discussions on the development of a national defence strategy in the forum of the national dialogue on 15 April. They will resume their deliberations on 3 June.

Lebanon has also seen the successful conduct of the first two rounds of municipal elections on 2 and 9 May, which took place in an atmosphere of overall calm and stability and without security incidents. The next two rounds will take place on 23 May and 30 May.

Concerning the reconstruction of the Nahr el-Bared refugee camp, international support remains of great importance. There is a shortfall of $209 million to cover the costs of rebuilding the camp.

The situation in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon area of operations remained largely quiet. On 16 April, a local Member of Parliament led a demonstration in the village of Al-Abbassiye, and around 20 demonstrators, including journalists, crossed south of the Blue Line, where one person planted two Lebanese flags at the technical fence. The demonstration and the Blue Line violation took place in the area where, three days earlier, the IDF had carried out work north of the technical fence, but south of the Blue Line. No Blue Line violation had occurred during that work. A week later, on 23 April, demonstrators, led by the same Member of Parliament, crossed the Blue Line in the Shab'a area, in violation of resolution 1701 (2006). In both instances, the situation was tense but contained. Israeli air violations have continued on an almost daily basis. On a number of days, there were over 30 violations, the majority of which were carried out by fighter jets.

The search for Arab-Israeli peace must be comprehensive. We continue to value close engagement with Arab partners, which have a crucial role to play in supporting efforts on the Israeli-Palestinian track. Moreover, the Israeli-Syrian and the Israeli-Lebanese tracks, and indeed the framework provided by the Arab Peace Initiative, must be fully integrated into an overall effort for comprehensive peace, as recognized by the Quartet in Moscow. Efforts must continue to restart regional negotiations, and I take note of recent efforts by Israeli and Syrian leaders to convey messages of peace through international leaders. The situation in the occupied Syrian Golan remained stable, although settlement activity continued.

In conclusion, after many setbacks and delays, we are entering a new phase in the efforts for Israeli-Palestinian peace. Those efforts have our strong support, and I am convinced of the united determination of the international community. But let us all realize that we do not have the luxury of time. There is distrust and scepticism among people on both sides; their leaders face multiple political challenges, and there are powerful elements who will seek to derail progress.

Negotiations need to address the core issues and cannot be allowed to stagnate. Equally, the process must be sustained by positive actions on the ground, including in Gaza and Jerusalem, and in the further empowerment of Palestinian State-building. The United Nations will continue to play its full role in such efforts, consistent with the resolutions of the Council.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Serry for his briefing.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.35 a.m.